28

THE PARIS REVIEW

EZRA POUND

HENRY MILLER
interviews

SAMUEL BECKETT

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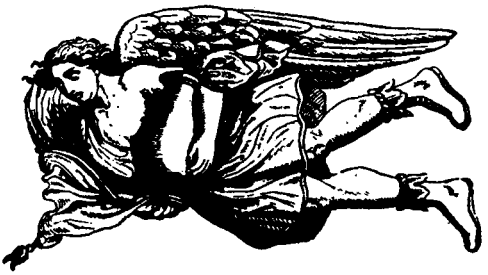

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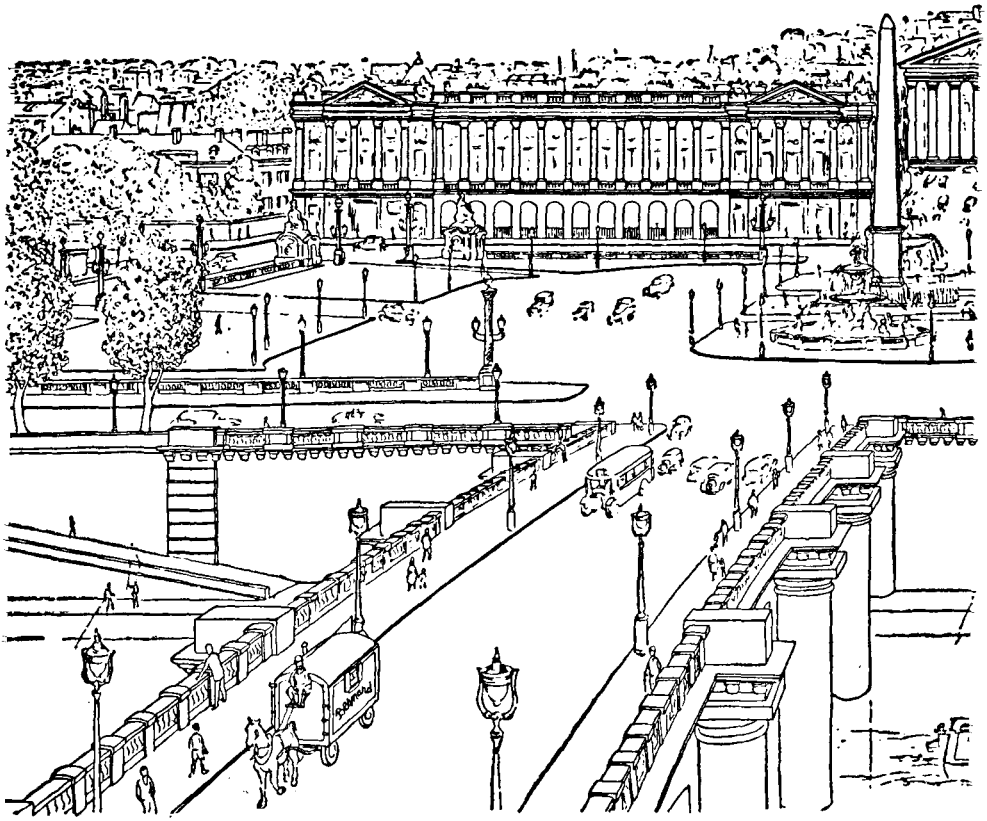

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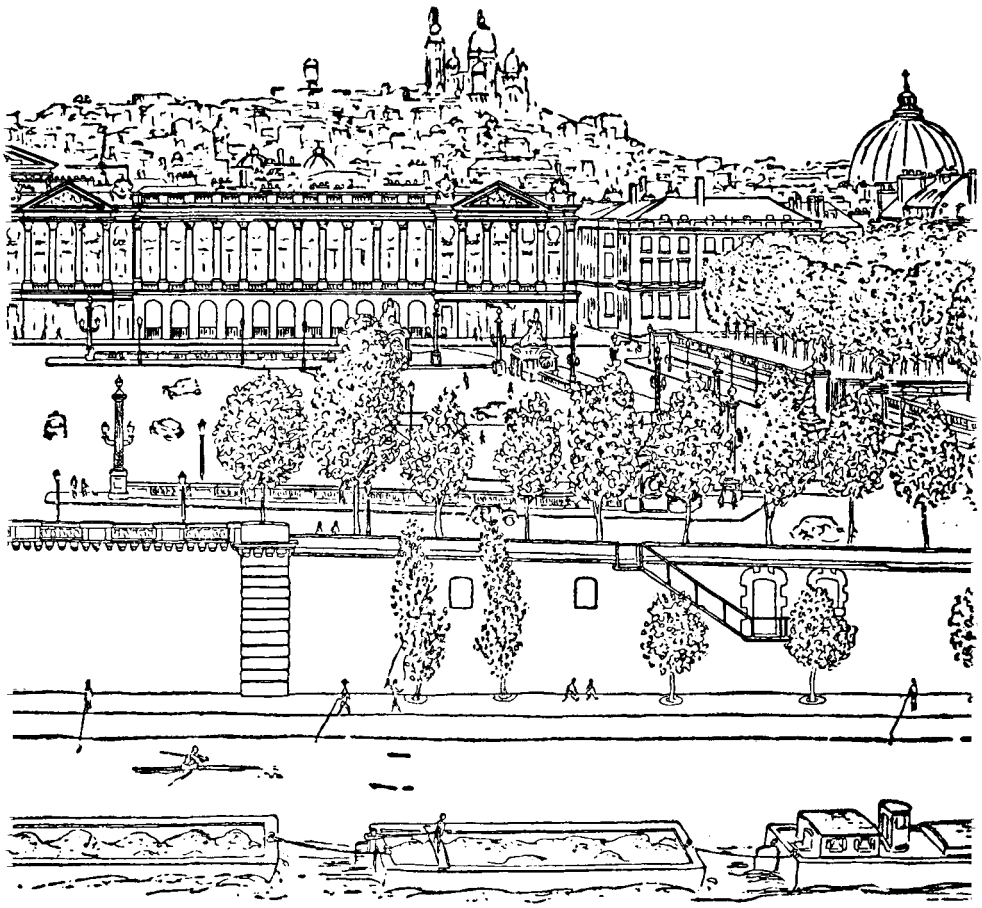

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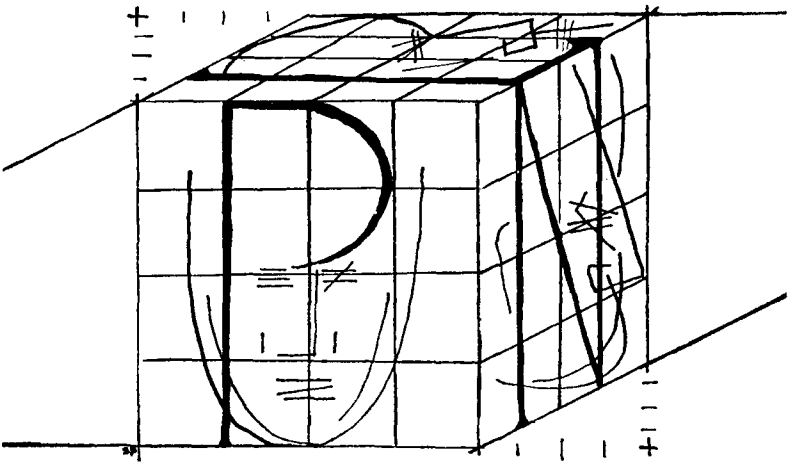

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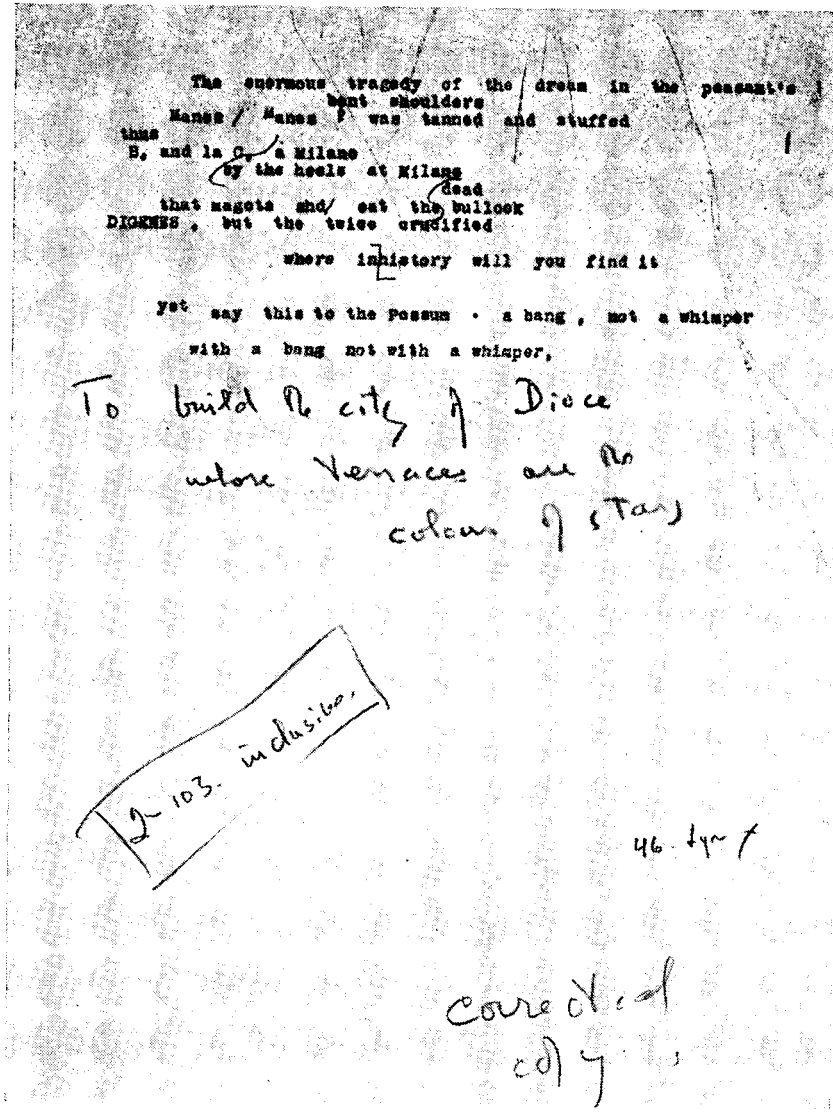
The enormous tragedy of the dream in the peasant's
bent shoulders
Manes / Manes ? was tanned and stuffed
thus
B, and la C, a Milano
by the heels at Milano
dead
that magots and/ eat the bullock
DIGNESS , but the twice crucified
where in history will you find it
yet say this to the Possum · a bang , not a whimper
with a bang not with a whimper,
To build a city of Dioce
where Venaces are no
colum of (Tar)
2 103. inclusive.
46. typ
corrected
copy

Page one of Pound's MS of The Pisan Cantos, with insertions in Pound's hand

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TWO CANTOS

by Ezra Pound

***from* Canto 115**

The scientists are in terror
and the European mind stops
Wyndham Lewis accepted blindness
rather than have his mind stop

night under wind mid garofani
the petals are almost still.

Mozart, Linnaeus, Sulmona,

When one's friends hate each other
how can there be peace in the world
Their asperities diverted me in my green time.

A blown husk that is finished
but the light sings eternal
a pale flare over marshes
Where the salt hay whispers to tide's change

Time, space,
neither life nor death is the answer.

and of men seeking good,
doing evil.

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in meine Heimat
where the dead walked
and the living were made of cardboard

Canto 116

Came Neptunus

his mind leaping like dolfins,
These concepts the human mind has attained,

To make Cosmos —
To achieve the possible,
Mus, wrecked for an error,
But the record, the palimpsest —
a little light in great darkness —
cuniculi —
an old "crank" dead in Virginia —

Unprepared young burdened with records,
The vision of the Madonna
above the cigar butts;
over the portal.
"Have made a mass of laws
(mucchio di leggi)
Litterae nihil sanantes
Justinian's,
a tangle of works unfinished.

I have brought the great ball of crystal,
who can lift it?
Can you enter the great acorn of light?

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but the beauty is not the madness
Tho my errors and wrecks lie about me.

and I cannot make it cohere

If love be not in the house there is nothing,

The voice of famine unheard.

How came beauty against this blackness,
Twice beauty under the elms —
to be saved by squirrels and bluejays?
"plus j'aime le chien"

Ariadne,
Disney against the metaphysicals,
And Laforgue more than they thought in him,
Spire thanked me in proposito
And I have learned more from Jules
(Jules Laforgue)
since then
deep in him,
and Linnaeus
chi crescerá nostri

but about that terzo
Third heaven,
that Venere,
again "is all paradiso"
a nice quiet paradise
over the shambles,
and some climbing,

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before the take-off,
to "see again".
there verb is "see" not "walk on"
i.e. it coheres all right
even if my notes do not cohere,
Many errors,
a little rightness,
to excuse his hell and my paradiso

and as to why they wrong,
thinking of rightness

And as to who will copy this palimpsest?

al poco giorn'
ed al gran cerchio d'ombra

But to affirm the gold thread in the pattern
(Torcello)
al Vicolo d'Oro
(Tigullio)

To confess wrong without losing rightness

Charity I have had sometimes,
I cannot make it flow thru.

A little light like a rush light
to lead back splendour.

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Ezra Pound: A Prison-Letter.

The remarkable document here published for the first time is an explanatory note to the censor at the Pisa Detention Camp where Pound was held after the war. That officer, in censoring Pound's correspondence (which included the MSS of verse on its way to Pound's publishers) apparently suspected the Pisan Cantos *were in fact coded messages. Pound is writing to explain this is not the case.*

E.Pound

NOTE TO BASE CENSOR

The Cantos contain nothing in the nature of cypher or intended obscurity. The present Cantos do, naturally, contain a number of allusions and "recalls" to matter in the earlier 71 cantos already published, and many of these cannot be made clear to readers unacquainted with the earlier parts of the poem.

There is also an extreme condensation in the quotations, for example
"Mine eyes have" (given as mi-hine eyes hev)
refers to the Battle Hymn of the Republic as heard from the loud speaker. There is not time or place in the narrative to give the further remarks on "seeing the glory of the lord."

In like manner citations from Homer or [redacted] Sophokles or Confucius are brief, and serve to remind the ready reader that we were not born yesterday.

The Chinese ideograms are mainly translated, or commented in the english text. At any rate they contain nothing seditious.

The form of the poem and main progress is conditioned by its own inner shape, but the life of the D.T.C. passing OUTSIDE the scheme cannot but impinge, or break into the main flow. The proper names given are mostly those of men on sick call seen passing my tent. A very brief allusion to further study in names, that is, I am interested to note that the prevalence of early american names, either of whites of the old tradition (most of the early presidents for example) or of descendents of slaves who took the names of their masters. Interesting in contrast to the relative scarcity of melting-pot names.

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Enrico Prampolini: sketch of Pound in Rapallo, 1934.

EZRA POUND

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE

(written for Louis Untermeyer)

(At top, in Pound's hand, in ink:) Ezra Pound to LU—a statement "in order to put the facts straight."

Rapallo. 1932.

Entered U.P. Penn at 15 with intention of studying comparative values in literature (poetry) and began doing so unbeknown to the faculty. 1902 enrolled as special student to avoid irrelevant subjects. 1903—5 continued process at Ha-

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milton College under W.P. Shepard, "Schnitz" Brandt and J.D. Ibbotson. 1905—7 P.G. at U. of Penn. Chiefly impressed by lack of correlation between different depts. and lack either of general survey of literature or any coherent interest in literature as such (as distinct for example from philology). 07—08 Instructor with Professorial functions at Wabash College Crawfordsville Ind. the "Athens of the West", a town with literary traditions "Lew Wallace died there." E.P. was fired at the end of 4 months all accusations save that of his being "the latin Quarter type" having been ultimately refuted. But the widow never married the President of the College after all.

1908 landed in Gibralter with 80 dollar and lived on the interest for some time. Life saved by Yusuf Benamore. (tourists please note and use the Benamore family if couriers are required.)

1908 A Lume Spento printed in Venice. Quinzaine, London.

1909: Personae (spring) Exultations (Autumn), quoted (with expurgations) in the International Sunday School lessons. etc. after which his intellexshul biography is largely contained in his publications (vide English Who's Who E.P. having been expurgated from the American Who's Who for disorderly conduct.

In 1912 invented terms "Imagiste" and Imagisme, the latter in order to avoid vain gabble as to the nature of poetry. Has no objection to pleasure others have had in exploiting these lables and offering cheap imitation, but regrets loss of critical distinction between poetry which "uses no word which does not contribute to the presentation" and verbosity (more or less rhythmic). Had no connection with the Amygist movement in American verse.

Invented the term vorticism and contributed to Wyndham Lewis "Blast" in 1914. 1927 produced "How to Read" summary of his critical conclusions, exposition of a method and proof that his various prose books and literary studies had not been haphazard dilletantism but done in pursuance with plan and coherent design. 1910—29 examination of neglected

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sections of society (i.e; sections neglected by uplift societies, Paul Morand, labour etc.)

1917-20 study of musicians on the hoof. 1919-21 composed an opera "Le Testament" (words by François Villon, plot and music by E.P.) opera edited by G. Antheil 1924. Books still in print. *Personae* (the collected poems, save the Cantos, Liveright 1926, 2nd. edtn. 1927.

Cantos I to XVI. Three Mts. Press, Paris 1925

Cantos XVII–XXVII, John Rodker, London 1927

Books announced for 1930:

Cantos I to XXX, Hours Press, Paris

The Poems of Guido Cavalcanti, definitive variorum text printed edited by E.P. complete translation, with commentary and second complete text in Manul reproductions of mss. chosen so as to give full paleographic history of the poems. Aquila Press, London.

Collected Prose Work (folio) Aquila if the press survives the strain.

Collaboration with various reviews notably Poetry (1912-1914)

Little Review Egoist 1913-15 (foreign edtr. 1917-19 introducing J.J's Ulysses, work of Eliot, Wynd. Lewis etc.)

Dial about 1920-21. contributor to New Age 1919-20

Edtr. The Exile; 1927-28.

social seat. London 1908-20

Paris 20-24

Rapallo 24—

Any attempt to do justice to P. shd. take count of the chronology of his work in relation to that by others. e;g; compare translations from the Chinese publ. before his CATHAY (1915) and those published after that date. The extent or "secret of his mysterious" influence can be gauged by comparing his critical action with that of the other "critics" who establish a reputation or position by safe rehash what has already been said about accepted writers (of the past or present)

(In Pound's hand, in ink:)

When possible put DATES on poems.

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note his instant placing of authors now famous, e;g; the essay on Tagor (as literary artist not as messiah) that appeared in the Fortnightly immediately on pub. of Gitanjali.

The evaluation of Ulysses in the Mercure de France (June 1922) the first french critique of Joyce; establishing the proportion between Joyce and Flaubert. note also early essays of Joyce, Wyndham Lewis etc; in 1913, 1914; cf. Pound essay on Eliot in 1917 with Edmund Wilson on Eliot in 1930.

Note also the Several dozen well known authors poets and prosewriters who owe their first appearance in print or in america to P's intervention. was able to state in Jan 1930.

Quality to be judged progressive by the groupings of authors in the various reviews to which he has been official or unofficial advisor from the Egoist days onward...

Yet in 1930 P was able to state that NO american pubshr. had *ever* accepted a book on his recommendation! no am. univ. or cultural institution had ever invited him to lecture (this despite his double qualification as author and man of learning) nor had he ever been invited to serve on any jury of awards to art, music or literature nor had any fellowship to a writer ever been made on his recommendation.

Not a complaint but an observation helping one calculate the state of intelligence in certain quarters.

By 1920 he had been excluded from every review or weekly Paper in England except the New Age.

The old magazines Harper Cent. Scrib. he has always regarded as a form of detritus; and the persistence with which they continue to reject the real thing when made and take the 3d. rate imitation five ten twenty years later has never indicated a revision of his opinion.

Question of the accuracy or inaccuracy of P's scholarship can be best settled by someone who has tried to find an error in his life of S. Malatesta in the cantos, or in his edtn. of Cavalcanti.

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Portrait of Ezra Pound by Franco Gentilini

THE ART OF POETRY V

EZRA POUND: AN INTERVIEW

Since his return to Italy, Ezra Pound has spent most of his time in the Tirol, staying at Castle Brunnenberg with his wife, his daughter Mary, his son-in-law Prince Boris de Rachewiltz, and his grandchildren. However, the mountains in this resort country near Merano are cold in the winter, and Mr. Pound likes the sun. The interviewer was about to leave England for Merano, at the end of February, when a telegram stopped him at the door: "Merano icebound. Come to Rome."

Pound was alone in Rome, occupying a room in the apartment of an old friend named Ugo Dadone. It was the be-

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ginning of March and exceptionally warm. The windows and shutters of Pound's corner room swung open to the noises of the Via Angelo Poliziano. The interviewer sat in a large chair while Pound shifted restlessly from another chair to a sofa and back to the chair. Pound's impression on the room consisted of two suitcases and three books: the Faber *Cantos*, a Confucius, and Robinson's edition of Chaucer which he was reading again.

In the social hours of the evening—dinner at Crispi's, a tour among the scenes of his past, ice cream at a café—Pound walked with the swaggering vigor of a young man. With his great hat, his sturdy stick, his tossed yellow scarf and his coat which he trailed like a cape, he was the lion of the Latin Quarter again. Then his talent for mimicry came forward, and laughter shook his gray beard.

During the daytime hours of the interview, which took three days, he spoke carefully and the questions sometimes tired him out. In the morning when the interviewer returned, Mr. Pound was eager to revise the failures of the day before.

INTERVIEWER

You are nearly through the *Cantos* now, and this sets me to wondering about their beginning. In 1916 you wrote a letter in which you talked about trying to write a version of Andreas Divus in Seafarer rhythms. This sounds like a reference to *Canto 1*. Did you begin the *Cantos* in 1916?

POUND

I began the *Cantos* about 1904, I suppose. I had various schemes, starting in 1904 or 1905. The problem was to get a form—something elastic enough to take the necessary material. It had to be a form that wouldn't exclude something merely because it didn't fit. In the first sketches, a draft of the present first *Canto* was the third.

Obviously you haven't got a nice little road map such as the middle ages possessed of Heaven. Only a musical form would take the material, and the Confucian universe as I see it is a universe of interacting strains and tensions.

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INTERVIEWER

Had your interest in Confucius begun in 1904?

POUND

No, the first thing was this: you had six centuries that hadn't been packaged. It was a question of dealing with material that wasn't in the *Divina Commedia*. Hugo did a *Légende des Siècles* that wasn't an evaluative affair but just bits of history strung together. The problem was to build up a circle of reference—taking the modern mind to be the mediaeval mind with wash after wash of classical culture poured over it since the renaissance. That was the psyche, if you like. One had to deal with one's own subject.

INTERVIEWER

It must be thirty or thirty-five years since you have written any poetry outside the *Cantos*, except for the Alfred Venison poems. Why is this?

POUND

I got to the point where apart from an occasional lighter impulse, what I had to say fitted the general scheme. There has been a good deal of work thrown away because one is attracted to an historic character and then finds that he doesn't function within my form, doesn't embody a value needed. I have tried to make the *Cantos* historic (vid. G. Giovannini, re-relation history to tragedy. Two articles ten years apart in some philological periodical, not source material but relevant) but not fiction. The material one wants to fit in doesn't always work. If the stone isn't hard enough to maintain the form, it has to go out.

INTERVIEWER

When you write a *Canto* now, how do you plan it? Do you follow a special course of reading for each one?

POUND

One isn't necessarily reading. One is working on the life

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vouchsafed, I should think. I don't know about method. The *what* is so much more important than how.

INTERVIEWER

Yet when you were a young man, your interest in poetry concentrated on form. Your professionalism, and your devotion to technique, became proverbial. In the last thirty years, you have traded your interest in form for an interest in content. Was the change on principle?

POUND

I think I've covered that. Technique is the test of sincerity. If a thing isn't worth getting the technique to say, it is of inferior value. All that must be regarded as exercise. Richter in his *Treatise on Harmony*, you see, says, "These are the principles of harmony and counterpoint; they have nothing whatever to do with composition, which is quite a separate activity." The statement, which somebody made, that you couldn't write Provençal canzoni forms in English, is false. The question of whether it was advisable or not was another matter. When there wasn't the criterion of natural language without inversion, those forms were natural, and they realised them with music. In English the music is of a limited nature. You've got Chaucer's French perfection, you've got Shakespeare's Italian perfection, you've got Campion and Lawes. I don't think I got around to this kind of form until I got to the choruses in the *Trachiniae*. I don't know that I got to anything at all, really, but I thought it was an extension of the gamut. It may be a delusion. One was always interested in the implication of change of pitch in the union of *motz et son*, of the word and melody.

INTERVIEWER

Does writing the *Cantos*, now, exhaust all of your technical interest, or does the writing of translations, like the *Trachiniae* you just mentioned, satisfy you by giving you more fingerwork?

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POUND

One sees a job to be done and goes at it. The *Trachiniae* came from reading the Fenollosa Noh plays for the new edition, and from wanting to see what would happen to a Greek play, given that same medium and the hope of its being performed by the Minorou company. The sight of Cathay in Greek, looking like poetry, stimulated crosscurrents.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think that free verse is particularly an American form? I imagine that William Carlos Williams probably does, and thinks of the iambic as English.

POUND

I like Eliot's sentence: "No verse is *libre* for the man who wants to do a good job." I think the best free verse comes from an attempt to get back to quantitative meter.

I suppose it may be *un-English* without being specifically *American*. I remember Cocteau playing drums in a jazz band as if it were very difficult mathematical problem.

I'll tell you a thing that I think *is* an American form, and that is the Jamesian parenthesis. You realize that the person you are talking to hasn't got the different steps, and you go back over them. In fact the Jamesian Parenthesis has immensely increased now. That I think is something that is definitely American. The struggle that one has when one meets another man who has had a lot of experience to find the point where the two experiences touch, so that he really knows what you are talking about.

INTERVIEWER

Your work includes a great range of experience, as well as of form. What do you think is the greatest quality a poet can have? Is it formal, or is it a quality of thinking?

POUND

I don't know that you can put the needed qualities in hierarchic order, but he must have a continuous curiosity,

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which of course does not make him a writer, but if he hasn't got that he will wither. And the question of doing anything about it depends on a persistent energy. A man like Agassiz is never bored, never tired. The transit from the reception of stimuli to the recording, to the correlation, that is what takes the whole energy of a lifetime.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think that the modern world has changed the ways in which poetry can be written?

POUND

There is a lot of competition that never was there before. Take the serious side of Disney, the Confucian side of Disney. It's in having taken an ethos, as he does in *Perri*, that squirrel film, where you have the values of courage and tenderness asserted in a way that everybody can understand. You have got an absolute genius there. You have got a greater correlation of nature than you have had since the time of Alexander the Great. Alexander gave orders to the fishermen that if they found out anything about fish that was interesting, a specific thing, they were to tell Aristotle. And with that correlation you got ichthyology to the scientific point where it stayed for two thousand years. And now one has got with the camera an *enormous* correlation of particulars. That capacity for making contact is a tremendous challenge to literature. It throws up the question of what needs to be done and what is superfluous.

INTERVIEWER

Maybe it's an opportunity, too. When you were a young man in particular, and even through the *Cantos*, you changed your poetic style again and again. You have never been content to stick anywhere. Were you consciously looking to extend your style? Does the artist *need* to keep moving?

POUND

I think the artist *has* to keep moving. You are trying to

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render life in a way that won't bore people and you are trying to put down what you see.

INTERVIEWER

I wonder what you think of contemporary movements. I haven't seen remarks of yours about poets more recent than Cummings, except for Bunting and Zukovsky. Other things have occupied you, I suppose.

POUND

One can't read everything. I was trying to find out a number of historic facts, and you can't see out of the back of your head. I do not think there is any record of a man being able to criticize the people that come after him. It is a sheer question of the amount of reading one man can do.

I don't know whether it is his own or whether it is a gem that he collected, but at any rate one of the things Frost said in London in 19—whenever it was—1912, was this: "Summary of prayer: 'Oh God, pay attention to *me*.'" And that is the approach of younger writers—not to divinity exactly!—and in general one has to limit one's reading to younger poets who are recommended by at least one other younger poet, as a sponsor. Of course a routine of that kind could lead to conspiracy, but at any rate...

As far as criticising younger people, one has not the time to make a *comparative* estimate. People one is learning from, one does measure one against the other. I see a stirring now, but... For *general* conditions there is undoubtedly a *liveliness*. And Cal Lowell is very good.

INTERVIEWER

You have given advice to the young all your life. Do you have anything special to say to them now?

POUND

To improve their curiosity and not to fake. But that is not enough. The mere registering of bellyache and the mere dumping of the ashcan is not enough. In fact the University

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of Pennsylvania student *Punchbowl* used to have as its motto, "Any damn fool can be spontaneous."

INTERVIEWER

You once wrote that you had four useful hints from living literary predecessors, who were Thomas Hardy, William Butler Yeats, Ford Madox Ford, and Robert Bridges. What were these hints?

POUND

Bridges' was the simplest. Bridges' was a warning against homophones. Hardy's was the degree to which he would concentrate on the subject matter, not on the manner. Ford's in general was the *freshness* of language. And Yeats you say was the fourth? Well, Yeats by 1908 had written simple lyrics in which there were no departures from the natural order of words.

INTERVIEWER

You were secretary to Yeats in 1913 and 14. What sort of thing did you do for him?

POUND

Mostly reading aloud. Doughty's *Dawn in Britain*, and so on. And wrangling, you see. The Irish like contradiction. He tried to learn fencing at forty-five, which was amusing. He would thrash around with the foils like a whale. He sometimes gave the impression of being even a worse idiot than I am.

INTERVIEWER

There is an academic controversy about your influence on Yeats. Did you work over his poetry with him? Did you cut any of his poems in the way you cut *The Waste Land?*

POUND

I don't think I can remember anything like that. I am sure I objected to particular expressions. Once out at Rapallo I

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tried for God's sake to prevent him from printing a thing. I told him it was rubbish. All he did was print it with a preface saying that I *said* it was rubbish.

I remember when Tagore had taken to doodling on the edge of his proofs, and they told him it was art. There was a show of it in Paris. "Is this art?" Nobody was very keen on these doodlings, but of course so many people lied to him.

As far as the change in Yeats goes, I think that Ford Madox Ford might have some credit. Yeats never would have taken advice from Ford, but I think that Fordie helped him, via me, in trying to get towards a natural way of writing.

INTERVIEWER

Did anyone ever help you with your work as extensively as you have helped others? I mean by criticism or cutting.

POUND

Apart from Fordie, rolling on the floor undecorously and holding his head in his hands, and groaning on one occasion, I don't think anybody helped me through my manuscripts. Ford's stuff appeared too loose then, but he led the fight against tertiary archaisms.

INTERVIEWER

You have been closely associated with visual artists—Gaudier-Brzeska and Wyndham Lewis in the Vorticist movement, and later Picabia, Picasso and Brancusi. Has this had anything to do with you as a writer?

POUND

I don't believe so. One looked at paintings in galleries and one might have found out something. "The Game of Chess" poem shows the effect of modern abstract art, but vorticism from my angle was a renewal of the sense of construction. Colour went dead and Manet and the impressionists revived it. Then what I would call the sense of form was blurred, and vorticism, as distinct from cubism, was an attempt to revive the sense of form—the form you had in Piero della Frances-

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ca's *De Prospettive Pingendi*, his treatise on the proportions and composition. I got started on the idea of comparative forms before I left America. A fellow named Poole did a book on composition. I did have *some* things in my head when I got to London, and I *had* heard of Catullus before I heard about modern French poetry. There's a bit of biography that might be rectified.

INTERVIEWER

I have wondered about your literary activities in America before you came to Europe. When did you first come over, by the way?

POUND

In 1898. At the age of twelve. With my great aunt.

INTERVIEWER

Were you reading French poetry then?

POUND

No, I suppose I was reading Grey's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" or something. No, I wasn't reading French poetry. I was starting Latin next year.

INTERVIEWER

You entered college at fifteen, I believe?

POUND

I did it to get out of drill at Military Academy.

INTERVIEWER

How did you get started being a poet?

POUND

My grandfather on one side used to correspond with the local bank President in verse. My grandmother on the other side and her brothers used verse back and forth in their letters. It was taken for granted that anyone would write it.

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INTERVIEWER

Did you learn anything in your university studies which helped you as a poet? I think you were a student for seven or eight years.

POUND

Only six. Well, six years and four months. I was writing all the time, especially as a graduate student. I started in freshman year studying Layamon's *Brut* and Latin. I got into college on my Latin; it was the only reason they *did* take me in. I did have the idea, at fifteen, of making a general survey. Of course whether I was or wasn't a poet was a matter for the Gods to decide, but at least it was up to me to find out what had been done.

INTERVIEWER

You taught for four months only, as I remember. But you know that now the poets in America are mostly teachers. Do you have any ideas on the connection of teaching in the university with writing poetry?

POUND

It is the economic factor. A man's got to get in his rent somehow.

INTERVIEWER

How did you manage all the years in Europe?

POUND

Oh, God. A miracle of God. My income gained from October 1914 to October 1915 was £42.10.0. That figure is clearly engraved on my memory....

I was never too good a hand at writing for the magazines. I once did a satirical article for Vogue, I think it was. On a painter whom I did not admire. They thought I had got just the right tone and then Verhaeren died and they asked me to do a note on Verhaeren. And I went down and said, "You want a nice bright snappy obituary notice of the gloomiest man in Europe."

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"What, gloomy cus, was he?"

"Yes," I said. "He wrote about peasants."

"Peasants or pheasants?"

"Peasants."

"Oh, I don't think we ought to touch it."

That is the way I crippled my earning capacity by not knowing enough to keep quiet.

INTERVIEWER

I read somewhere—I think you wrote it—that you once tried to write a novel. Did that get anywhere?

POUND

It got, fortunately, into the fireplace at Langham Place. I think there were two attempts, before I had any idea whatever of what a novel ought to be.

INTERVIEWER

Did they have anything to do with "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley?"

POUND

These were long before "Mauberley." "Mauberley" was later, but it *was* the definite attempt to get the novel cut down to the size of verse. It really is "Contacts and Life." Wadsworth seemed to think "Propertius" difficult because it was about Rome, so one applied the same thing to the contemporary outside.

INTERVIEWER

You said it was Ford who helped you toward a natural language, didn't you? Let's get back to London again.

POUND

One was hunting for a simple and natural language, and Ford was ten years older, and accelerated the process toward it. It was a continual discussion of that sort of thing. Ford knew the best of the people who were there before him, you

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see, and he had nobody to play with until Wyndham and I and my generation came along. He was definitely in opposition to the dialect, let us say, of Lionel Johnson and Oxford.

INTERVIEWER

You were for two or three decades at least in contact with all of the leading writers in English of the day and a lot of the painters, sculptors and musicians. Of all these people, who were the most stimulating to you as an artist?

POUND

I saw most of Ford and Gaudier, I suppose. I should think that the people that I have written about were the most important to me. There isn't much revision to make there.

I may have limited my work, and limited the interest in it, by concentrating on the particular intelligence of particular people, instead of looking at the complete character and personality of my friends. Wyndham Lewis always claimed that I never *saw* people because I never noticed how wicked they were, what S.O.B's. they were. I wasn't the least interested in the vices of my friends, but in the intelligence.

INTERVIEWER

Was James a kind of a standard for you in London?

POUND

When he died one felt there was no one to ask about anything. Up to then one felt someone knew. After I was sixty-five I had great difficulty in realising that I was older than James had been when I met him.

INTERVIEWER

Did you know Remy de Gourmont personally? You've mentioned him frequently.

POUND

Only by letter. There was one letter, which Jean de Gourmont also considered important, where he said, "franchement d'écrire ce qu'on pense, seul plaisir d'un écrivain."

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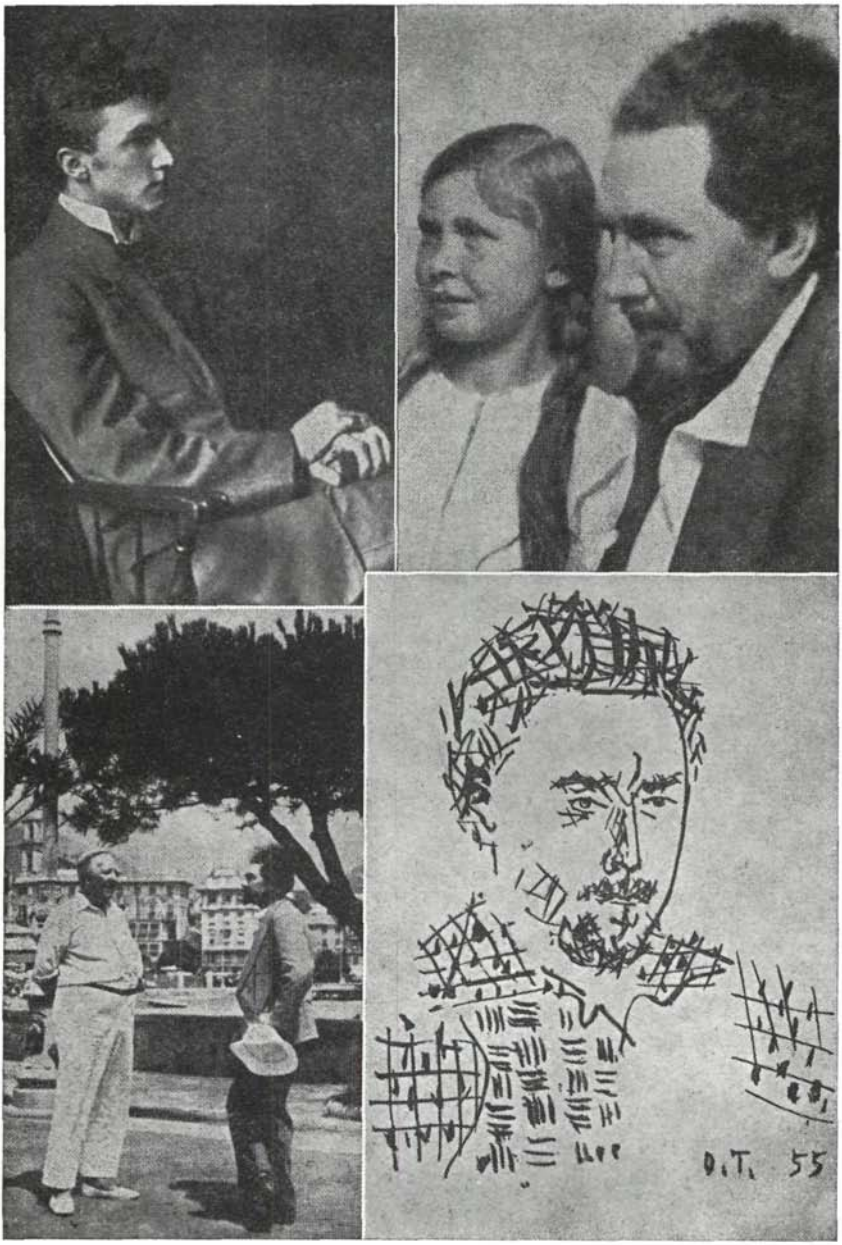

Studio L. Czigany, Paris.

Key, reading from top down, Left: 1. Pound in Venice, 1908. 2. Ford Madox Ford and Pound in Rapallo, 1932.
Right: 1. Pound with his daughter Mary, Venice 1935. 2. Orfeo Tamburi: Pound in 1955.

Thanks are due to James Laughlin of New Directions for making MSS and photographs available to The Paris Review. [Ref: Iconografia Italiana di Ezra Pound a cura di Vanni Scheiwiller.]

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INTERVIEWER

It is amazing that you could come to Europe and quickly associate yourself with the best living writers. Had you been aware of any of the poets writing in America before you left? Was Robinson anything to you?

POUND

Aiken tried to sell me Robinson and I didn't fall. This was in London too. I then dragged it out of him that there was a guy at Harvard doing funny stuff. Mr. Eliot turned up a year or so later.

No, I should say that about 1900, you had Carman and Hovey, Carwine and Vance Cheney. The impression then was that the American stuff wasn't *quite* as good as the English at any point. And you had Mosher's pirated editions of the English stuff. No, I went to London because I thought Yeats knew more about poetry than anybody else. I made my life in London by going to see Ford in the afternoons and Yeats in the evenings. By mentioning one to the other one could always start a discussion. That was the exercise. I went to study with Yeats and found that Ford disagreed with him. So then I kept on disagreeing with *them* for twenty years.

INTERVIEWER

In 1942, you wrote that you and Eliot disagreed by calling each other protestants. I wonder when you and Eliot diverged.

POUND

Oh, Eliot and I started diverging from the beginning. The fun of an intellectual friendship is that you diverge on something or other and agree on a few points. Eliot, having had the Christian patience of tolerance all his life and so forth, and working very hard, must have found me very trying. We started disagreeing about a number of things from the time we met. We also agreed on a few things and I suppose both of us must have been right about something or other.

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INTERVIEWER

Well, was there a point at which poetically and intellectually you felt further apart than you had been?

POUND

There's the whole problem of the relation of Christianity to Confucianism, and there's the whole problem of the different brands of Christianity. There is the struggle for orthodoxy—Eliot for the Church, me gunning round for particular theologians. In one sense Eliot's curiosity would appear to have been focussed on a smaller number of problems. Even that is too much to say. The actual outlook of the experimental generation was all a question of the private ethos.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think that as poets, you felt a divergence on technical grounds, unrelated to your subject matter?

POUND

I should think the divergence was first a difference in subject matter. He has undoubtedly got a natural language. In the language in the plays, he seems to me to have made a very great contribution. And in being able to make contact with an extant milieu, and an extant state of comprehension.

INTERVIEWER

That reminds me of the two operas—*Villon* and *Cavalcanti*—which you wrote. How did you come to compose music?

POUND

One wanted the word *and* the tune. One wanted great poetry *sung*, and the technique of the English opera libretto was not satisfactory. One wanted, with the quality of the texts of Villon and of Cavalcanti, to get something more extended than the single lyric. That's all.

INTERVIEWER

I suppose your interest in words to be sung was especially

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stimulated by your study of Provence. Do you feel that the discovery of Provençal poetry was your greatest breakthrough? Or perhaps the Fenollosa manuscripts?

POUND

The Provençal began with a very early interest, so that it wasn't really a discovery. And the Fenollosa was a windfall and one struggled against one's ignorance. One had the inside knowledge of Fenollosa's notes and the ignorance of a five year old child.

INTERVIEWER

How did Mrs. Fenollosa happen to hit upon you?

POUND

Well I met her at Sarojini Naidu's and she said that Fenollosa had been in opposition to all the Profs. and academes, and she had seen some of my stuff and said I was the only person who could finish up these notes as Ernest would have wanted them done. Fenollosa saw what needed to be done but he didn't have time to finish it.

INTERVIEWER

Let me change the subject now, and ask you some questions which are more biographical than literary. I have read that you were born in Hailey, Idaho, in 1885. I suppose it must have been pretty rough out there then?

POUND

I left at the age of eighteen months and I don't remember the roughness.

INTERVIEWER

You did not grow up in Hailey?

POUND

I did not grow up in Hailey.

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INTERVIEWER

What was your family doing there when you were born?

POUND

Dad opened the Government Land Office out there. I grew up near Philadelphia. The suburbs of Philadelphia.

INTERVIEWER

The wild Indian from the West then was not...?

POUND

The wild Indian from the West is apocryphal, and the assistant assayer of the mint was not one of the most noted bandits of the frontier.

INTERVIEWER

I believe it's *true* that your grandfather built a railroad. What was the story of that?

POUND

Well he got the railroad into Chippewa Falls, and they ganged up on him and would not let him buy any rails. That's in the *Cantos*. He went up to the north of New York State and found some rails on an abandoned road up there, bought them and had them shipped out, and then used his credit with the lumber-jacks to get the road going to Chippewa Falls. What one learns in the home one learns in a way one doesn't learn in school.

INTERVIEWER

Does your particular interest in coinage start from your father's work at the mint?

POUND

You can go on for a long time on that. The government offices were more informal then, though I don't know that any other kids got in and visited. Now the visitors are taken through glass tunnels and see things from a distance, but you

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could then be taken around in the smelting room and see the gold piled up in the safe. You were offered a large bag of gold and told you could have it if you could take it away with you. You couldn't lift it.

When the Democrats finally came back in, they recounted all the silver dollars, four million dollars in silver. All the bags had rotted in these enormous vaults, and they were heaving it into the counting machines with shovels bigger than coal shovels. This spectacle of coin being shovelled around like it was litter—these fellows naked to the waist shovelling it around in the gas flares—things like that strike your imagination.

Then there's the whole technique of making metallic money. First, the testing of the silver is much more tricky than testing gold. Gold is simple. It is weighed, then refined and weighed again. You can tell the grade of the ore by the relative weights. But the test for silver is a cloudy solution; the accuracy of the eye in measuring the thickness of the cloud is an aesthetic perception, like the critical sense. I like the idea of the *fineness* of the metal, and it moves by analogy to the habit of testing verbal manifestations. At that time, you see, gold bricks, and specimens of iron pyrites mistaken for gold, were brought up to Dad's office.—You heard the talk about the last guy who brought a gold brick and it turned out to be fool's gold.

INTERVIEWER

I know you consider monetary reform the key to good government. I wonder by what process you moved from aesthetic problems toward governmental ones. Did the great war, which slaughtered so many of your friends, do the moving?

POUND

The great war came as a surprise, and certainly to see the English—these people who had never done anything—get hold of themselves, fight it, was immensely impressive. But as soon as it was over they went dead, and then one spent the next twenty years trying to prevent the second war. I can't

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say exactly where my study of government started. I think the *New Age* office helped me to see the war as a separate event but as part of a system, one war after another.

INTERVIEWER

One point of connection between literature and politics which you make in your writing interests me particularly. In the *A.B.C. of Reading* you say that good writers are those who keep the language efficient, and that this is their function. You disassociate this function from party. Can a man of the wrong party use language efficiently?

POUND

Yes. That's the whole trouble! A gun is just as good, no matter who shoots it.

INTERVIEWER

Can an instrument which is orderly be used to create disorder? Suppose good language is used to forward bad government? Doesn't bad government make bad language?

POUND

Yes, but bad language is *bound* to make in addition bad government, whereas good language is *not* bound to make bad government. That again is clear Confucius: if the orders aren't clear they can't be carried out. Lloyd George's laws were such a mess, the lawyers never knew what they meant. And Talleyrand proclaimed that they changed the meaning of words between one conference and another. The means of communication breaks down and that of course is what we are suffering now. We are enduring the drive to work on the subconscious without appealing to the reason. They repeat a trade name with the music a few times, and then repeat the music without it so that the music will give you the name. I think of the *assault*. We suffer from the use of language to conceal thought and to withhold all vital and direct answers. There is the definite use of propaganda, forensic language, merely to conceal and mislead.

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INTERVIEWER

Where do ignorance and innocence end and the chicanery begin?

POUND

There is natural ignorance and there is artificial ignorance. I should say at the present moment the artificial ignorance is about 85 per cent.

INTERVIEWER

What kind of action can you hope to take?

POUND

The only chance for victory over the brainwash is the right of every man to have his ideas judged one at a time. You never get clarity as long as you have these package words, as long as a word is used by twenty-five people in twenty-five different ways. That seems to me to be the first fight, if there is going to be any intellect left.

It is doubtful whether the individual soul is going to be allowed to survive at all. Now you get a Buddhist movement with everything *except* Confucius taken into it. An Indian Circe of negation and dissolution.

We are up against so many mysteries. There is the problem of benevolence, the point at which benevolence has ceased to be operative. Eliot says that they spend their time trying to imagine systems so perfect that nobody will have to be good. A lot of questions asked in that essay of Eliot's cannot be dodged, like the question of whether there need be any change from the Dantesquan scale of values or the Chaucerian scale of values. If so, how much? People who have lost reverence have lost a great deal. That was where I split with Tiffany Thayer. All these large words fall into clichés.

There is the mystery of the scattering, the fact that the people who presumably understand each other are geographically scattered. A man who fits in his milieu as Frost does, is to be considered a happy man.

Oh, the luck of a man like Mavrocordato, who is in touch with other scholars, so that there is somewhere where he can

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verify a point! Now for certain points where I want verification there is a fellow named Dazzi in Venice that I write to and he comes up with an answer, as it might be about the forged Donation of Constantine. But the advantages which were supposed to inhere in the university—where there are other people to *contrôl** opinion or to *contrôl* the data—were very great. It is crippling not to have had them. Of course I have been trying over a ten year period to get any member of an American faculty to mention any other member of his same faculty, in his own department or outside it, whose intelligence he respects or with whom he will discuss serious matters. In one case the gentleman regretted that someone else had *left* the faculty.

I have been unable to get straight answers out of people on what appeared to me to be vital questions. That may have been due to my violence or obscurity with which I framed the questions. Often, I think, so-called obscurity is not obscurity in the language but in the other person's not being able to make out *why* you are saying a thing. For instance the attack on Endymion was complicated because Gifford and company couldn't see why the deuce Keats was doing it.

Another struggle has been the struggle to keep the value of a local and particular character, of a particular culture in this awful maelstrom, this awful avalanche toward uniformity. The whole fight is for the conservation of the individual soul. The enemy is the supression of history; against us is the bewildering propaganda and brainwash, luxury and violence. Sixty years ago, poetry was the poor man's art: a man off on the edge of the wilderness, or Fremont, going off with a Greek text in his pocket. A man who wanted the best could have it on a lonely farm. Then there was the cinema, and now television.

INTERVIEWER

The political action of yours that everybody remembers is your broadcasts from Italy during the war. When you gave

*Pound indicates that he is using the French 'contrôler': 'to verify, check information, a fact.'

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these talks, were you conscious of breaking the American law?

POUND

No, I was completely surprised. You see I had that promise. I was given the freedom of the microphone twice a week. "He will not be asked to say anything contrary to his conscience or contrary to his duty as an American citizen." I thought that covered it.

INTERVIEWER

Doesn't the law of treason talk about "giving aid and comfort to the enemy," and isn't the enemy the country with whom we are at war?

POUND

I thought I was fighting for a Constitutional point. I mean to say, I may have been completely nuts, but I certainly *felt* that it wasn't committing treason.

Wodehouse went on the air and the British asked him not to. Nobody asked me not to. There was no announcement until the collapse that the people who had spoken on the radio would be prosecuted.

Having worked for years to prevent war, and seeing the folly of Italy and America being at war—! I certainly wasn't telling the troops to revolt. I thought I was fighting an internal question of constitutional government. And if any man, any individual man, can say he has had a bad deal from me because of race, creed, or colour, let him come out and state it with particulars. The *Guide to Kulchur* was dedicated to Basil Bunting and Louis Zukovsky, a Quaker and a Jew.

I don't know whether you think the Russians ought to be in Berlin or not. I don't know whether I was doing any good or not, whether I was doing any harm. Oh, I was probably offside. But the ruling in Boston was that there is no treason without treasonable intention.

What I was right about was the conversation of individual rights. If when the executive, or any other branch, exceeds its

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legitimate powers, no one protests, you will lose all your liberties. My method of opposing tyranny was wrong over a thirty year period; it had nothing to do with the second world war in particular. If the individual, or heretic, gets hold of some essential truth, or sees some error in the system being practiced, he commits so many marginal errors himself that he is worn out before he can establish his point.

The world in twenty years has piled up hysteria—anxiety over a third war, bureaucratic tyranny, and hysteria from paper forms. The immense and undeniable loss of freedoms, as they were in 1900, is undeniable. We have seen the acceleration in efficiency of the tyrannizing factors. It's enough to keep a man worried. Wars are made to make debt. I suppose there's a possible out in space satelites and other ways of making debt.

INTERVIEWER

When you were arrested by the Americans, did you then expect to be convicted? To be hanged?

POUND

At first I puzzled over having missed a cog somewhere. I expected to turn myself in and to be asked about what I learned. I did and I wasn't. I know that I checked myself, on several occasions during the broadcasts, on reflecting that it was not up to me to do certain things, or to take service with a foreign country. Oh, it was paranoia to think one could argue against the usurpations, against the folks who got the war started to get America into it. Yet I hate the idea of obedience to something which is wrong.

Then later I was driven in to the courtyard at Chiavari. They had been shooting them, and I thought I was finished then and there. Then finally a guy came in and said he was damned if he would hand me over to the Americans unless I wanted to be handed over to them.

INTERVIEWER

In 1942, when the war started for America, I understand

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you tried to leave Italy and come back to the United States. What were the circumstances of the refusal?

POUND

Those circumstances were by hearsay. I am a bit hazy in my head about a considerable period, and I think that... I know that I had a chance to get as far as Lisbon, and be cooped up there for the rest of the war.

INTERVIEWER

Why did you want to get back to the States at that time?

POUND

I wanted to get back during the election, before the election.

INTERVIEWER

The election was in 1940, wasn't it?

POUND

That would be 1940. I don't honestly remember what happened. My parents were too old to travel. They would have had to stay there in Rapallo. Dad retired there on his pension.

INTERVIEWER

During those years in the war in Italy did you write poetry? The *Pisan Cantos* were written when you were interned. What did you write during those years?

POUND

Arguments, arguments and arguments. Oh, I did some of the Confucius translation.

INTERVIEWER

How was it that you began to write poetry again only after you were interned? You didn't write any cantos at all during the war, did you?

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POUND

Let's see—The Adams stuff came out just before the war shut off. No. There was *Oro e lavoro*. I was writing economic stuff in Italian.

INTERVIEWER

Since your internment, you've published three collections of *Cantos*, *Thrones* just recently. You must be near the end. Can you say what you are going to do in the remaining *Cantos?*

POUND

It is difficult to write a paradiso when all the superficial indications are that you ought to write an apocalypse. It is obviously much easier to find inhabitants for an inferno or even a purgatorio. I am trying to collect the record of the top flights of the mind. I might have done better to put Agassiz on top instead of Confucius.

INTERVIEWER

Are you more or less stuck?

POUND

Okay, I am stuck. The question is, am I dead, as Messrs. A.B.C. might wish? In case I conk out, this is provisionally what I have to do: I must clarify obscurities; I must make clearer definite ideas or dissociations. I must find a verbal formula to combat the rise of brutality—the principle of order versus the split atom. There was a man in the bughouse, by the way, who insisted that the atom had never been split.

An epic is a poem containing history. The modern mind contains heteroclite elements. The past epos has succeeded when all or a great many of the answers were assumed, at least between author and audience, or a great mass of audience. The attempt in an experimental age is therefore rash. Do you know the story: "What are you drawing, Johnny?"

"God!"

"But nobody knows what He looks like."

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"They will when I get through!"
That confidence is no longer obtainable.

There *are* epic subjects. The struggle for individual rights is an epic subject, consecutive from jury trial in Athens to Anselm versus William Rufus, to the murder of Becket and to Coke and through John Adams.

Then the struggle appears to come up against a block. The nature of sovereignty is epic matter, though it may be a bit obscured by circumstance. Some of this *can* be traced, pointed; obviously it has to be condensed to get into the form. The nature of the individual, the heteroclite contents of contemporary consciousness. It's the fight for light versus sub-consciousness; it demands obscurities and penumbras. A lot of contemporary writing avoids inconvenient areas of the subject.

I am writing to resist the view that Europe and civilisation is going to Hell. If I am being "crucified for an idea"—that is, the coherent idea around which my muddles accumulated—it is probably the idea that European culture ought to survive, that the best qualities of it ought to survive along with whatever other cultures, in whatever universality. Against the propaganda of terror and the propaganda of luxury, have you a nice simple answer? One has worked on certain materials trying to establish bases and axes of reference. In writing so as to be understood, there is always the problem of rectification without giving up what is correct. There is the struggle not to sign on the dotted line for the opposition.

INTERVIEWER

Do the separate sections of the *Cantos*, now—the last three sections have appeared under separate names—mean that you are attacking particular problems in particular sections?

POUND

No. *Rock Drill* was intended to imply the necessary resistance in getting a certain main thesis across—hammering. I was not following the three divisions of the *Divine Comedy* exactly. One can't follow the Dantesquan cosmos in an age of

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experiment. But I have made the division between people dominated by emotion, people struggling upwards, and those who have some part of the divine vision. The thrones in Dante's *Paradiso* are for the spirits of the people who have been responsible for good government. The thrones in the *Cantos* are an attempt to move out from egoism and to establish some definition of an order possible or at any rate conceivable on earth. One is held up by the low percentage of reason which seems to operate in human affairs. *Thrones* concerns the states of mind of people responsible for something more than their personal conduct.

INTERVIEWER

Now that you come near the end, have you made any plans for revising the *Cantos*, after you've finished?

POUND

I don't know. There's need of elaboration, of clarification, but I don't know that a comprehensive revision is in order. There is no doubt that the writing is too obscure as it stands, but I hope that the order of ascension in the Paradiso will be toward a greater limpidity. Of course there ought to be a corrected edition because of errors that have crept in.

INTERVIEWER

Let me change the subject again, if I may. In all those years in St. Elizabeth's, did you get a sense of contemporary America from your visitors?

POUND

The trouble with visitors is that you don't get enough of the opposition. I suffer from the cumulative isolation of not having had enough contact—fifteen years living more with ideas than with persons.

INTERVIEWER

Do you have any plans for going back to the States? Do you want to?

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POUND

I undoubtedly want to. But whether it is nostalgia for America that isn't there any more or not I don't know. This is a difference between an abstract Adams—Jefferson—Adams—Jackson America, and whatever is really going on. I undoubtedly have moments when I should like very much to live in America. There are these concrete difficulties against the general desire. Richmond is a beautiful city but you can't live in it unless you drive an automobile. I'd like at least to spend a month or two a year in the U.S.

INTERVIEWER

You said the other day that as you grew older you felt more American all the time. How does this work?

POUND

It works. Exotics were necessary as an attempt at a foundation. One is transplanted and grows, and one is pulled up and taken back to what one has been transplanted from and it is no longer there. The contacts aren't there and I suppose one reverts to one's organic nature and finds it merciful. Have you ever read Andy White's memoirs? He's the fellow who founded Cornell University. That was the period of euphoria, when everybody thought that all the good things in America were going to function, before the decline, about 1900. White covers a period of history that goes back to Buchanan on one side. He alternated between being Ambassador to Russia and head of Cornell.

INTERVIEWER

Your return to Italy has been a disappointment then?

POUND

Undoubtedly. Europe was a shock. The shock of no longer feeling oneself in the center of something is probably part of it. Then there is the incomprehension, Europe's incomprehension, of organic America. There are so many things which

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I, as an American, cannot say to a European with any hope of being understood. Somebody said that I am the last American living the tragedy of Europe.

—DONALD HALL

Note: Mr. Pound's health has made it impossible for him to finish proof-reading this interview.

TWO FARM SCENES

I

On the farm this had been the hour
Persimmon leaves rang like iron
Or the sound of a screendoor slamming
Flung itself for two long miles up the hill
Beyond turnstiles, past the laggard cows
To the ear's target where the boy wandered,
Tapping his fresh stick along the path.
Or perhaps the old man's shout caught him
In a beaver brook, where long grasses combed
The mud. Deer too indulged the sliding belly,
Endured chill blessings of the sly and beaver priests
Who raised the waters high over an eager back.

II

The boy looks up from the long rows of corn,
Startled. He sees the old man as if a horn blew.
O why does he fear his grandfather
Grey in the startling sun, beyond silken curls?
Only that that man might bother
To stoop and tell him how years flee,
Delicate and skittish as his pale pony.

—DAVID RAY

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HOMER, The Iliad

From a new English version
of Book Sixteen

by Christopher Logue

PROLOGUE

In the ninth summer of the Trojan War Achilles withdrew his forces from the Greek Confederacy because Agamemnon appropriated one of his female slaves. Thereafter the Trojans gained the upper hand. Hector raided the Greek beachhead, crossed the ditch surrounding their fleet and burned one of their ships. For a moment it looked as though he would burn them all; and so Patroclus came to Achilles and begged for his help.

Now hear this:
While they fought around the ship from Thessaly,
Patroclus came crying to the Greek.

"Why tears, Patroclus?" Achilles said.
"Why hang around my ankles like a child
Pestering mother, wanting to be picked up,
Expecting her to stop what she is doing, and,
In the end, getting its way through snivels?

And Patroclus:
"Save your hate, Achilles. It will keep.
Our cause is sick enough without your grudging it my tears.
You know Odysseus and Diomede are wounded?
Eurypylus, too—his thigh—and even Agamemnon.
And you still ask "*Why tears*?" Ach,
Is there no end to your obdurate grudge, Achilles?

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They are dying, Achilles. Dying like flies.
If you can't think of them, think for a moment
Of those who will come after them, what they will say:
"*Achilles The Grudgebearer*"—can't you hear it?—or,
"*Achilles The Strong*"—and just as well for that,
Because his sense of wrong was very heavy—or,
"*Some people say Lord Peleus and Thetis,*
Lovely among the loveliest of women,
Were his folk. But if you want the truth,
His father was a long bleak rock
That after centuries was moved
By the even bleaker, always disconsolate
Pestering of the Sea, until she had a son,
Achilles."

Why make me talk to you this way?
If it is true that God or your sainted Mother
Whisper persuasive justifications for desertion in your heart,
It's also true they do not mention me.

Let me go out and help the Greeks, Achilles?
Let me take our troops? Half of them, then!—
And let me wear your weapons...
Man, it will be enough!
Me, dressed as you, leading the Myrmidons...
The sight of us will make Troy hesitate and say
"*It's him,*" a second look will check them, turn them,
Give the Greeks a rest (although war has no rest)
And, once they have turned, nothing will stop us till
They squat inside their walls."

In this way, in words
Something like those written above,
Patroclus begged for death.

And Achilles:

You mind your tongue,

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And not make God sound like a fool
Servicing my resentment.

And they stared each other down until he said:

"O, Patroclus,
I'm so full of resentment that I ache.
Tell me, have I got it wrong?
Didn't he take the girl I won?
And didn't all my so-called friends agree that she was mine
Who cut a town in half to get her?—
(That was something!)—yet,
When it comes to it, they side with him,
The Royal thief
Who robs the man on whom his commonwealth depends.
But done is done; I cannot grudge forever, love.
Take what you want: men, horses, cars, the lot."
You could see the grudge was almost gone,
Him saying:
"Muster the troops and thrust them, hard,
Just here"—marking the sand— "between the enemy
And the fleet. Aie!... they are impudent,
These golden Trojans.
They stroke our ships,
Fondle their slim black necks and split them—
Yes! Dear Agamemnon makes me absent.
My absence makes them brave. And so, Patroclus,
Dear Agamemnon makes his enemies secure. All right:
If not Achilles, then his vicar.
Forget the spear. It's not your weight. Take this"—
Choosing one half as long—"instead.
You say Diomede is out? That's bad. And Ajax too?
He's all that's left then... No wonder all I hear is
Hector, Hector, Hector, Hector, everywhere Hector,
As if he was a god split into sixty!
Hurry, Patroclus, or they will burn us out—
No. Wait. Listen to me. You're listening? Good.
Here's what I want.

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Win my apologies. My rights and my apologies.
That's all. You hear? I want the Greeks saved, yes,
And then I want to see them at the tent here,
Every single one, with Briesis, virgin, in the front.
And many other gifts. You're clear on that?
Good. And one more thing before you go:
  Don't overreach yourself, Patroclus.
Without me you are something, but not much.
Let Hector be. He's mine—God willing—
In any case he'd make a meal of you
And I don't want you killed, you hear?
But neither do I want to see you shining
At my expense. So, here's my order.
No matter how, how much, how often, or how easily you win,
Once you have forced the Trojans back, you stop. That's clear?
The mercenaries can do the mopping up.

  And while he talked Ajax was beaten.

The ship was burned.

October.
The hungry province grows restive.
The Imperial army must go to the frontier.
Dawn.
The Captains ride in with their standards,
A tiger's face carved on each lance-butt.
And equipment for a long campaign
Is issued to every soldier.
First-light.
Men stand behind the level feathers of their breath.
A messenger runs from the gold edged tent,
And the Captains form a circle: reading.
The eldest one points north. The others nod.

  Likewise the Captains stood around Achilles: listening.
And the Myrmidons began to arm and tramp about the beach.
First sunlight off the sea like thousands of white birds.

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Salt haze.

Imagine wolves: an hour ago the pack
Smelt out a stag and tore it into shreds.
Now they have snuffled through its corpse
They want a drink to wash the curry down; so,
They sniff out a pool and loll their long
Thin, sharp-pointed tongues in it; and as they lap
Little crimson billows drift off their chops,
Spreading through the water like red smoke.

Likewise the Myrmidons as they stood for Patroclus,
While Achilles moved along their ranks; here,
Tightening a shoulder strap; there, dressing a sword.

Over in the north the ship was burning.

Achilles led fifty ships to Troy.
Fifty swift ships, each holding fifty men,
And the force divided into five, under five Commanders.

The Myrmidons paraded.
The five Commanders on Achilles' right;
Patroclus on his left; in front of him, the troops.
And the onshore wind carried his voice:
"*Myrmidons!*
In the last few weeks you have been jeering at the Trojan soldiers and gossiping about myself.
When I was called self-righteous, none of you denied it. When it was said that the hardness of my heart proved that I was weaned on acid, most of you smiled wisely. And some of you said that if I were to keep heroes like yourselves out of the fight, you'd sail home. However, more men are threatened than struck; and now that you are going to be employed, I hope that none of you will find it more difficult to beat the Trojans than to threaten them.
You will clear the enemy from our camp by dusk."

And he turned his back on them and walked into his tent.

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The columns tightened.
The rim of each man's shield
Overlapped the face of his neighbour's shield
Like ashlar work—as masons call it when they lay
Bonded walls, proof against wind.
As they moved off
The columns tightened more, till, from far off,
It seemed five wide black straps studded with bolts
Were being drawn across the sand.

When Achilles sailed to Troy,
His mother packed and put aboard his ship
A painted oak box filled with winter clothes—
Rugs for his feet, a fleece-lined windcheater,
You know the sort of thing—and in this box
He kept an eye-bowl made of ivory and horn
Which he, and he only, used for communion.
When he had spoken to the troops he took it out,
Rubbed its inside with sulphur chrystals,
And washed and dried his hands before
Rinsing it in fresh water and filling it with red wine,
Then, he prayed:
Our Father, who rules in Heaven,
Hallowed be your name.
Because your will is done in Earth and Heaven,
Grant me this prayer,
As you have granted other prayers of mine,
As you did grant me Agamemnon
Humble in my stead.
I ask that you stay by me now,
Even as you go with my men,
And my Patroclus.
Give him this day your victory.
And let him show Prince Hector he can win
Without me at his side.
And grant, above all else, O Lord,
That when the Trojans are defeated, he
Shall come home safe to me. Amen.

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God heard his prayer and granted half of it.
Patroclus would rout the Trojans, yes.
But not a word was said about his safe return.
No, my Achilles, God promised nothing of the kind;
As you carefully dried your cup, carefully
Put it away and stood outside your tent and watched
Your myrmidons and your Patroclus go by.

Swarming up and off the beach Patroclus swung them left
At the ditch; keeping it on their right they streamed
Along the camp's main track; on one side, the embankment
On the other, ships — a line of slender necking
With the huts clutched under the tense black hulls.
Things were so close a man could hardly see in front of him,
And Patroclus on the foot-plate of his chariot, cried —
"FOR ACHILLES!"
As the two sides closed.

The Trojans lay across the ship,
Most of them busy seeing that it burned.
Others slid underneath and were so occupied
Knocking away the chocks that kept it upright
They did not see Patroclus swoop
Out of nowhere on their necks.
But those above did.
Between the time it takes to dip and light a match
Achilles' helmet loomed under their wretched chins,
With Myrmidons splayed out on either side
Like iron wings.
Dropping the pitch
They grabbed up javelins, knives — boathooks, too — oh,
Anything to keep Achilles off!
Had he and Agamemnon patched things up?
Likely enough ...
And are we covered from the rear?
Too late to ask.

Patroclus aimed where they were thickest.

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That is to say, around a Macedonian
Chariot commander called Pyraykemese,
Tough, one of Troy's best. But, just as Patroclus aimed
The ship's mast split from stem to peak — Aoi! — and fell
Lengthwise across the incident.
  Its fat waist clubbed the hull's top strake,
And the whole ship flopped sideways.
Those underneath got crunched.
And howling Greeks ran in
To stick the others as they slithered down
Into their lap.
  But not you, Pyraykemese; no,
Heaven had something special up its sleeve for you.
Because the mast's peak hit the ground no more than six
Foot from Patroclus' chariot hub, the horses shied,
Spoiling his cast. Nothing was lost. God blew the javelin straight
At Pyraykemese as he pitched downwards twenty feet,
Headfirst, back arched, belly towards the Greeks — who laughed —
The tab-ends of his metal kilt dangling across his chest.
  Whether it was the fall that scared him,
Or the vague flare Patroclus' javelin made
As it drifted through the morning air towards
His falling body like a yellow-headed bird,
We do not know. Suffice to say he shrieked until,
Mid-air, the cold bronze apex sank
Between his teeth and tongue,
Parted his brain, pressed on, and skewered him
Against the upturned hull.
  His dead jaw gaped. His soul
Crawled off his tongue and vanished into sunlight...
Aoi! It was good to kill him!

Often at daybreak a salty moon
Hangs over Mount Ida, and the wind that comes
More than a thousand miles across Asia
Knocks a tile off Priam's roof. He yawns.

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About this time each day for nine long years
His men marched down the Skean road, their spears
Are like bright nettles stirred by the wind.
And round about this time each day
The Greek commanders shade their eyes
And squinny through the sun. Estimating.
And since no battle has ever returned
All of its soldiers, the Trojans turn, look back,
Think of behind the wall and think
Of those who will need other men next day.

The battle swayed.
Half naked men hacked slowly at each other,
As the Greeks eased back the Trojans. Close, they stood;
Closer; thigh in thigh; mask twisted over iron mask
Like kissing.
One moment fifty chariots break out; head for the ditch;
Three cross; the rest wheel back; vanish in ochre dust.
For an instant the Greeks falter. One is killed. Then
The Trojans are eased back a little more,
The ship is cleared, the fire smothered. Who cares
That Hector's chariot opens a new way,
Now moving, now pausing, now moving on again,
And his spear flickers along the smoky light
Like the head of a crested adder over ferns,
Always the Trojans are eased back towards the ditch.

From the far bank Hector tried to help them.
Impossible...
He did not guess
So many cars, horses, infantry had crossed.
Engaged, there never seemed to be enough; now,
They crammed the edge,
Horses rearing over the drop, big-eyed,
Their mouths wrenched sideways, whinnying,
Neck yokes dragged back like saddles,
And though the drivers looped their reins,
Pegged themselves in and strained,

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The teetering mass eased forwards...
  Only the soft rim held them.
As the wheels notched into it the dirt came up
Over the bolts that pinned the axles to the centre-poles,
Horses lay one side of the rim,
Cars and men the other.
  Stuck.
While other men, infantry,
Meant to be rearguard, climbed into, pulled friends into,
More and more packed in the slipping chariots,
Shouted, struck anyone who checked them, jammed
Spear-poles through spokes —
Ai!...
  And Patroclus let them, let them
While the Myrmidons got back their breath
(Resting musicians among exhausted dancers)
Let them balance, let them, then cried
  "For Achilles!"
And drove in.

  As you, Hector, drove off.
  So the Trojans nearest to Patroclus squirmed
Away from him towards the ditch; and those
Near falling in the ditch clawed back
Towards Patroclus; and those packed in between
Just clawed and squirmed and —
  Why did you leave them, Hector? You
Who had generals like clouds, soldiers like drops of rain,
As you were half way back to Priam's windy capital,
The soft edge gave and all your glittering soldiery
Toppled into the ditch like swill.

  Movement in the air. Gulls lift.
Sideslip. Land again. No more.
Mindless of everything Achilles said
  Patroclus went for Troy.

  Try to imagine how it looked.

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In your right hand
A paper fan three-quarters open.
Outward, along the leading edges
Of the two primary blades,
The Trojans run towards the rim.
The blade that follows off your thumb
Points towards Troy. The other blade,
Splayed horizontally across your palm,
Marks the ditch where the rump was butchered.
And Patroclus aims his forces at the point
Where all the blades are pinned
By a tiny swivel.

Nine more Lycians died on the long run for Troy.
And they were no great trouble.
If a spear slipped, Patroclus watched
Their white heels flutter up the plain through dust
While he wiped its haft, waited, and picked his next,
As carelessly as expert billiard players
Freshen the tip of a cue with green chalk,
And pick their shot.
The day seemed over. Dust could be left to settle.
But when their prince, Sarpedon, smelt the Lycian's panic,
He wedged his chariot across the rout, pushed up his mask,
And laughed:
"Well run, comrades; But what from?" —
Selecting two light javelins — "Who will wait
To see a known Prince fix
Once and for all this big anonymous Greek?"—
And vaulted off his chariot plate —
"That makes you sweat?" And flexed himself,
Running his thumb across the points, and scuffed
Dirt towards Patroclus who climbed down
More slowly, grinning under his iron.

It was noon.
God and His wife (who is his sister too)
Watched them prepare. He, with regret. She,

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With a certain womanly satisfaction heard him out.
"Surely Fate has marked enough good men without Sarpedon?
Shall I lift him up and away
To the clear meadows he rules in Lycia?
Or shall I let Patroclus have him?"
And she:
"I'm sure I don't know why you're asking me.
You'll do what suits you best — as you always do.
But remember this:
Others besides yourself have loved ones due today.
If one god saves his child, *all* of them will be doing it.
And then where will we be? My Dear,
I know you love Sarpedon and I know
His death goes hard. Why not do this:
Let him fight bravely for a while and when
Patroclus severs him from care and human misery,
Sleep and Death shall carry him to Lycia by Taurus,
Remembered by wise men throughout the world,
And buried royally."

Noon. Striped mosquitoes. Nothing stirring.

Under the white sun, back and forth
Across a disk of yellow earth, midway
Between the ditch and the closed stone capital,
The heroes fought like Pharaoh's bare-necked hens
Wrangling over carrion in mid air
They sight each other, stand on their tails, stoop,
Lock claws, lie back inside their wings and hang
High in between the white faced pyramids,
Savaging each other's craws.

Likewise the human champions,
Until Patroclus' spear nosed past Sarpedon's busy heart
And the ground sense in his body seeped away.

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He fell as a tree falls — oak, say, or pine —
Slowly at first and then, with the bright
Commercial axes thocking at its heart,
The tall hurt trunk lies down and settles
Resentfully among its leaves.

Sarpedon kneeled at first, then lay full length
Teeth clenched and calling "Glaucus!" behind them,
"Glaucus, be quick, or they will strip me
Even before I'm dead.
And if they do it, Glaucus, if
My captured weapons prove their jubilee,
Shame on you Glaucus till your dying day.
So get out best.
All of them — Hector, too — you'll not miss him?
And cover me with moving blades till sunset,
Then..." he was going,
"For my sake... going,
"Kill!"
And he was gone.
Sun reflected in his dry green eyes.
Patroclus in his chariot again,
Wiping his neck, his smiling beard,
About to signal the advance.
Listen Master!
Glaucus prayed to the Lord Apollo.

And Apollo, Mousegod, Lord of the Morning, He
Whose face is brighter than a thousand suns,
Mollified his wound with precious ointment,
And let delight like flame rise through his loins,
And more, for, as Glaucus ran for Hector,
Aeneas, the rest, Apollo called:
"Sun, stand thou still over Ilium,
And guard Sarpedon's ruined body till their blades
Move over it like grasses over stone."

Air into azure steel.

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The daytime like translucent bronze.
  And through it all
One sun's cord falling, opening out
A radiant cone around Sarpedon's body,
And him inside it,
Lying like a waxen god asleep on his outstretched hand.
  And his blood broke into hyacinths,
And the sand congealed as moss,
While Glaucus asked:
  "Do you forget your friends so quickly, Hector?
They bleed. You sun your knees. While you are safe,
They die, are stripped, yes, mutilated too,
And the upshot of your caution is
The humiliation of our dead and O, how easily
Ares — the slovenly pig-brained butcher god —
Prods his bronze instruments to put
More of us down, and add humiliation
To humiliation..."

  But they had gone.
Rolling across the plain together
Like an arrowhead from a kneeling bowshot,
Not looking at each other because tears...
  Hector, leaning over the horses
As if the chariot was fastened to his belly,
As if his eyes, not horses, drew the Trojans in
Towards the boiling spiral.

  Dust like red mist.
Pain like chalk on slate. Heat like Arctic.
The light withdrawn from Sarpedon's body.
The enemies swirling over it. Bronze flak.
  Man against man; banner behind slatted banner;
The torn gold overwhelming the faded blue,
Blue overcoming gold, both up again, both frayed
By arrows that drift like bees, thicker than autumn rain.
  The left horse falls. The right prances on blades.
Tearing its belly like a silk balloon,

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And the shields inch forward under bowshots,
And under the shields the half-lost soldiers think,
"*We fight when the sun rises. When it sets we count the dead.*
What has the beauty of Helen to do with us?" Half-lost,
With the ochre mist swirling around their knees
They shuffle forward, lost, until the shields clash
—AOI!
  Lines of black ovals eight feet high, clash
—AOI!
And in the half-light who will be first to hesitate,
Or, wavering, draw back, and, Yes!... the slow
Wavering begins and, Yes!... they bend away from us
As the spears flicker between the black hides,
The bronze glows vaguely, and bones show
Like pink drumsticks.
  And over it all,
As flies shift up and down a haemmorage alive with ants,
The captains in huge iron masks drift past each other,
Calling, calling, gathering light on their breastplates,
So stained they think that they are colleagues
And do not turn, do not salute, or else salute their enemies
But we who are under the shields know
Our enemy marches at the head of the column,
And yet we march!
The voice whose orders we obey is the voice of the enemy,
Yet we obey!
And he who is forever talking about enemies
Is himself the enemy!

  Light circling over the dunes. The flying white.
And far above the soldiers the larks soar,
  Treading the cloud, breathing the haze!

  Where is Sarpedon's body? Nobody knows.

  If Hector waved,
His wounded and his sick got up to fight again;
And if Patroclus called, the Myrmidons

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Laughed and called back — with them, as with Patroclus,
To die in battle was like going home.
Inside the yellow spiral
The enemies jammed cheek to cheek,
And both, because they could do nothing else,
Looked up and thought they saw the moon —
Was it so long? — and wondered to themselves,
"*Who will be left to praise us if we win?*
And if we lose, who will there be to bury us?"
Yet it was not the moon they saw but the sun
Turning a day longer than autumn
Above the dust.

You must recall the pause, thock, pause,
Sounds that are made when axeblades follow
Each other through a valuable wood.
Though the work is going on on the far
Side of the valley, and the axeblows are
Muted by a mile of clear, still standing air,
They throb, throb gently in your ears.
And occasionally you can hear a phrase
Spoken between the men who are more
Than a mile away, with perfect clarity.

Likewise the sounds of
Spear against spear, shield against shield, shields
Against gleaming spears around Sarpedon's body.
And nobody, including those who saw him lie
Like a waxen god asleep on his outstretched hand,
Could know him now.

And all this time God watched his favourite enemies,
Considering, "*Remember this:*
Others besides yourself have loved ones due today."
Not only God was out that day but Lord Apollo.
"*You know he loves the Trojans. So,*
No matter how, how much, how often, or how easily you win,

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Once you have forced them back, you stop."

And God turned to Apollo, saying:
"Mousegod, take my Sarpedon out of range
And clarify his wounds with mountain water.
Moisten his body with tinctures of white myrrh
And the sleeping iodine; and when the chrysms dry,
Fold him in minivers that never wear
And lints that never fade,
And call my two blind footmen, Sleep and Death,
And let them carry him to Lycia by Taurus,
Where his tribe, playing stone chimes and tambourines,
Will consecrate his royal death as fits a man
Before whose memory even the stones shall fade."
And Apollo took Sarpedon out of range,
And clarified his wounds with mountain water.
Moistened his body with tinctures of white myrrh
And the sleeping iodine, and when the chrysms dried
The Mousegod folded him in minivers that never wear
And lint that never fades,
And fetched the two blind footmen, Sleep and Death,
And saw they carried him, as fits a man
Before whose memory even the stones shall fade,
To Lycia by Taurus.

While this was done Achilles' overreaching vicar killed,

Eckelus, of whom nothing is known; Perimas, the son of Meges; Sistor, an Egyptian horse dealer; Keth and San, slaves to the former; Krates, a silversmith from Cyme; Doron, a regular; Pilarty, a cook; Fanes, Geyan, & Mastor, farriers; Toris, a merchant slaver.

Three times Patroclus climbed Troy's wall.
Three times his fingers scraped the parapet.
Three times and every time he tried it on
The smiling Mousegod flicked him back.
But when he came a fourth, last time,

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The smile was gone.
Instead, from parapet to plain to beach-head, on,
Across the rucked, sunlit Aegean, the Mousegod's voice—
Loud as ten thousand crying together —
Cried
"Greek,
Get back where you belong!"
So loud
Even the Yellow Judges passing sentence
Half of the world away, paused —
"Get back where you belong!
Troy will fall in God's good time,
But not to you!"

Banner behind slatted banner,
Blue overwhelmingly gold, gold over blue,
It was Patroclus' turn to run
Wide-armed, staring into the fight, and desperate
To hide (to blind that voice) to hide
Behind the moving blades.
And as he ran
Apollo dressed as Priam's brother
Settled beside the inner gates
And strolled with Hector for a while, and took his arm
And, mentioning the ways of duty, love, good-conduct,
And the other perishable joys infecting men,
Dissolved his cowardice with promises.
Think of it: They stand like brothers, man and god,
Chatting together on the parapet that spans the inner gate.
The elder points. The other nods. And the plumes nod
Over them both: Patroclus cannot see
The uncle's finger leading Hector's eye
Towards his heart. Nor does he hear Apollo whispering
"*Achilles' heart will break...*" And neither man
Imagines that a god discusses mortals with a mortal.

So Hector mounts. Half of each pair of gates swings in,
And with the sun across his shoulders like a metal stole

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Hector comes out.
The light weakens. Up on the hillside
Women waist-deep in dusk sing while working.
The first movement of sunset turns the blue air
Darker blue.

Patroclus fought like he was dreaming.
His head thrown up, his mouth—wide as a shrieking mask—
Sucked at the air to nourish his infuriated body,
And the Trojans seem to be drawn to him,
Locked round his waist, red water, washed against his chest,
And laid their tired necks beside his sword like birds,
—Is it a god? Divine? Needing no tenderness?—
Yet, instantly they touch he butts them,
Cuts them back.

You know from books and talking pictures,
How people without firearms set about
Killing a tiger that had grown too old
To prey on antelope or zebra and
Must confine its diet to the slower
Animals like man. Following its spoor,
They rig a long funnel of netting up
On spikes (like pointed clothes-props) and the lean
Striped beast is driven down its throat by gongs.
The net is shut. And when the beast is tired out
The humans kill it in their own good time.
But if the net breaks many humans die.

Likewise Patroclus broke among the Trojans.
A set of zealous bones covered with flesh,
Finished with bronze, dipped in blood,
And the whole being inspired by ferocity.
—Kill them!
My sweet Patroclus,
—Kill them!
As many as you can,
For

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Coming behind you in the dusk you felt
—What was it?—felt the darkness part and then
APOLLO!
Who had been patient with you,
Struck.

His hand came out of the east,
And in his wrist lay eternity.
And every atom of his mythic weight
Was poised between his fist and bent left leg.
And it hit the small of your back, Patroclus...
Your eyes leant out. Achilles' helmet rang
Far and away beneath the cannon-bones of enemy horses,
And Achilles' breastplate (five copper plys
Mastered with even bronze) split like a pod.
And you were footless... staggering... amazed
Between the clumps of dying, dying yourself,
Dazed by the brilliance in your eyes
And the noise, like weirs heard far away.
So you staggered, blind eyes open,
Dabbling your astounded fingers in the vomit
On your chest.
And all the Trojans lay and stared at you,
Propped themselves up and stared at you,
Feeling themselves as blest as you felt cursed.
All of them just lay and stared
Except a boy called Euphorbus.
He took his chance and threw. Straight.
The javelin went through both calves,
Stitching your knees together, and you fell
(Not noticing the pain) and tried to crawl.
Towards the fleet, and —even now—snatching
Euphorbus' ankle, Ah! and got it? No...
Not a boy's ankle that you got.
But Hector's

Standing above you,
His bronze mask smiling down into your face,

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Putting his spear through... ach, and saying,
"Why tears, Patroclus?
Did you hope to melt Troy down
And make our women carry home the ingots for you?
I can just imagine it!
You and your marvellous Achilles sitting,
Him with his upright finger wagging, saying,
"*Don't show your face in here again, Patroclus,*
Unless it's red with Hector's blood."
You fool.
You weak, impudent, silly little fool."
And Patroclus,
Shaking his voice out of his body, says
"Big mouth,
Remember it took three of you to kill me.
A god, a boy, and last of all, a hero!
I can hear Death
Calling my name and yet,
Somehow it sounds like "*Hector*"
And when I close my eyes
I see Achilles' face with Death's voice coming out of it."

Saying these things Patroclus died.
And as his soul went through the sand like water,
Hector drew out his spear and said,
"*Perhaps.*"

Danaen and auxiliary
from a Kylix of Duris (Baltimore Museum)

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THE LUSTS AND GRATIFICATIONS OF ANDRADA

by Albert J. Guerard

The Services of Security of "Santa Isabella", that parched and brutalized island satrapy, are notoriously efficient. But Manuel Andrada, who came to me in Boston, was the exception to this cold, deathly rule. He had known only failure and frustration since leaving home on a mission for which he was the least qualified, the most unsecretive "special agent" conceivable. He who so implausibly claimed to represent the National Library and Archives—and in fact did represent them, as well as the dreaded Services of Security—simply looked like a prize-fighter. Or like a man who might, with luck, prove a successful sentry for a warehouse or docks in that burning Caribbean capital. This was in fact the exact opinion later formed of Andrada by Miguel Rubinez, travelling overseer of The Protector's special agents.

Yet this was the man sent to treat with exile intellectuals for the unpublished writings of "the late Justo de Villamayor.' He turned up at my Boston apartment on a hot spring afternoon, wearing a hairy and homemade brown winter suit buttoned tight. There were obscene bulges near the armpits. These signified a large revolver and an equally large wallet containing all the documents necessary for survival in Santa Isabella. Manuel Andrada: a scarred and feverish apparition! His black hair might have been cut by following the edge of a bowl, except for the deep sideburns. A thick white gash ran above the right eye for over an inch, then cut down through the brow. A knife directed at the eye in mortal anger must have struck the skull instead and been repelled by its savage hardness. This was the emissary of the National

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Library—whose burning lusts would leave behind such an absurd trail.

Had he ever, I wondered, even been inside the National Library? He brought the very breath of Santa Isabella into my room with his harsh stare and peasant wariness, yet wore the fact of his duplicity like a badge. And what after all can one say of an agent so patriotic or so inept that he travelled with a large framed poster of The Protector, the *caudillo* himself in full uniform, to be hung above his bed in the hotel rooms of foreign cities, together with a large brass crucifix? Manuel Andrada was, simply, a mistake, a secretary's blunder perhaps, a misplaced name on a sheet of assignments: the one loose pin or crazily spinning flywheel in a well-oiled machine.

He came to me, appearing unannounced at my door—though I am not an "exile intellectual." I am merely a free-lance writer, and I was working on an article about Villamayor. I was interested in the not unusual Caribbean paradox: the subtle and delicate intellectual helplessly caught up in the brutalities of politics and power. I wanted to cover Villamayor's literary career, and his brief flurried term as Minister of Education... a term that ended violently after twenty-six days. Villamayor miraculously escaped his assassins on that occasion, and found his way to Mexico. But since then he had twice disappeared, each time in the company of a crazed and devoted female secretary. What really happened after the second disappearance? Was Villamayor fleeing the agents of The Protector, or had he already been destroyed by them? I had gone, a little brashly, to the Santa Isabella Consulate in New York, to ask what the government's present attitude was "toward the memory of Villamayor." And while there I raised the question that must have caused some alarm: Had Villamayor, subtle antagonist of The Protector, left any manuscripts behind? It was this question, of course, that brought Andrada to my door... with his offer of "collaboration." He seemed to think I had some special information. Together, he said, we could search for traces of the late exile's writings.

That was the start. Thereafter this innocent in his brown

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suit and cracked cardboard shoes attached himself to me, and would not be shaken off. He was like a salesman with a foot in the door, and simply moved into my life. I insisted I had no information at all, other than what had been published, but he refused to believe me. Three days running he came back: stubborn and hopeful, to ask whether I had made "fresh discoveries." And what could I do? There was no use hanging up if he telephoned, for he would appear twenty minutes later at my door, knocking in his peremptory way. So we did finally "collaborate". He gave me the names of several exiles in Boston, and they in turn led us to New York —where we learned soon enough that the "late Villamayor" was unsubduably alive. He was living in seclusion in Haiti, still with the devoted secretary.

But before this (and during his first ten days in Boston) Andrada had been arrested twice and hauled off to jail, screaming of "diplomatic immunity."

The first arrest occurred after a fight with two sailors on a downtown street, one of whom he had sent to the hospital, and for carrying a concealed weapon. One of the shyster lawyers who hang around the night court called me at two in the morning to ask whether I would guarantee his small fee. Andrada, it appears, had approached the sailors to ask for the "zone of the brothels". But the sailors misunderstood him. Knowing Andrada, I could easily imagine the whole scene: the stragglers on that narrow street after the bars were closed and all the theaters dark, as the scarred emissary stalked burning and alone. I could see his timid then sudden swerve and approach: his unintelligible plea to the sailors, with the dark craving face thrust up; the foreign-sounding murmur, possibly a claw on the sailor's sleeve, and the indecent female swellings near the armpits. The outraged sailor must have struck out at once... only to find himself moments later slumped and bleeding against a wall.

After that, I did not hear from Andrada for almost a week. Then he was arrested again. This time it was for molesting ("assaulting" would have been more exact) a woman in a large chain drug-store not a block from the Common. The

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woman had gone there for lunch. The lawyer who this time reached me by telephone was much amused by the claims of his excitable client. Would-be client, that is. It seems Andrada had only done what he had seen done many times, successfully, in motion-pictures and on television. He had described his conduct as "quite normal and pleasant." The lawyer, still laughing, evoked the small sombre figure in brown winter suit walking the long line of summery female backs, their faces addressed to the soda-fountain and the mirrors—the secretaries and salesgirls and filing clerks at the end of their lunch hour. And again I could imagine the scene: could see Andrada hesitate, then move slowly up and down the line in embarrassment, pausing now and then in his shyness to consider and fondle some object without seeing what it was, whether tube or paste or cream, remedy for headache or remedy for insomnia. He would have stared unblinking at the vast shelf of deodorants.

Then it appears he made his choice, made it abruptly and propelled himself toward the woman's back. He adressed the silken back in a low embarrassed murmur: "*tonight... cinema... entertainment... affection... refreshment... hotel.*" Evidently the woman did not know Andrada was speaking to her, and went on munching her sandwich. But he stood his ground obstinately, the hard jaw and slashed forehead and eyebrow poised just above her shoulder. And began to rub her back with the slow circular motion which, he had read, was sexually exciting.

The woman did understand, then; understood at least something. She turned and began to scream. It was, she later told the police, like seeing a face in a nightmare: the burning face and maniacal unsmiling eyes only inches from hers, while the arm reached now quite around and continued to rub her back.

She went on screaming. Andrada, frightened, aware of the white faces turning aghast and outraged on nearby stools, used his free hand to reassure her. "*It is nothing*! *It is only for pleasure*!" he shouted, himself panic-stricken now, holding her arm as with a claw. When the police arrived a minute or

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so later the employees of the drugstore had not yet been able to separate them. They were rolling on the floor. It was then —still entangled with this spitting fury of a woman, the two of them rolling as in combat or twin epilectic seizure—that Andrada (seeing the police at hand once more) began to bellow my name. "*Nicholas Clive! Send for Nicholas Clive!*" His coat had been ripped down over one shoulder, exposing the butt of the revolver. His cheek was bleeding; circumstances were beyond his control. And now the police again!

So he called out my name. It was the one name that occurred to him at this terrible moment. Moreover, I was his "only friend" in Boston. Half an hour later, when things were calmer, Andrada explained to the lawyer what I could do for him. First of all I must, as a journalist, use my influence to keep his name out of the papers. He did not want this exploit to come to the attention of the Consulate in New York. Secondly: would I this time go bail for him, since he had been arrested with only five dollars in his possession? Alternatively the lawyer could telephone authorization to Andrada's hotel to admit me to his room. There I would find six hundred one dollar bills in the ventilating shaft near the bed, just to the left of The Protector's great portrait.

Such was Andrada—the burning little man who, some days later, insisted on accompanying me to Haiti, where I hoped to talk with Villamayor. We went to New York, where we took adjoining rooms in a hotel, and had a long interview with Maria Teresa Aparicio, sister of Villamayor's secretary. Our information was correct: *Villamayor* (she called him "The Seducer") *and her poor lost sister were living in Haiti, though not in Port-au-Prince. They had gone down there after visiting in California Barbara Swenson, an ancient millionairess and financier of Latin-American revolutionaries. She had received a postcard from her sister, saying only that she was happy and well.* During the interview Andrada consumed large quantities of the rum which he had bought for the purpose of loosening our informant's tongue, but which she refused with a spinsterish shudder. It was instead his own tongue that was loosened—in a sudden angry tirade against "grudge-

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bearing exiles and visionaries," the atheistic scum and riff-raff seeking to overthrow established institutions. It horrified Andrada to think of Villamayor, once his country's greatest writer, in converse with such as Barbara Swenson.

That night I gave him the slip, not many hours after Maria Teresa Aparicio left us. From the next room I listened as Andrada watched television. He had bought another bottle of rum. Then I heard him moving about in the dark, stumbling drunkenly against the furniture, and at last I heard his snores. I left at once, went out to La Guardia, and took a half-empty night plane to Miami. I did not want to wait for morning and a through plane to Port-au-Prince; that is, I did not want to wait for Andrada. I needed to have at least one long talk with this slippery and enigmatic Villamayor before Andrada's blundering caused him to shut his door in our faces, or even disappear again. I was in Miami by six o'clock, in the hot still Florida dawn, with seven hours to wait.

So I went to a hotel, lay down in the now blazing morning; and almost overslept my plane. I had to rush to the airport without shaving. The small waiting-room for the Port-au-Prince flight was already filled when I arrived. There were a number of Haitian negroes dressed in white, also a few tourists.

And there by the gate, the first in line of course, was Manuel Andrada, still wearing his hairy brown suit. He had checked his miserable cardboard suitcase. But he was going to take a good deal onto the plane himself. In one hand he carried a large stack of girlie and true confession magazines, while with the other he held what could only have been the great framed portrait of The Protector, carefully wrapped in heavy brown paper.

He looked at me accusingly, but did not seem particularly surprised.

"You were wrong to leave that way, Nicholas Clive, and in the middle of the night. It was an unfriendly act. Did I not ask you to collaborate?"

It was the portrait, less than five hours later, that permitted

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me to give him the slip once again. Twenty minutes after we landed in Port-au-Prince I was through the customs while Andrada still argued with the gesticulating negro authorities. They had threatened to confiscate the poster of The Protector as intended for some obscure and evil political purpose. *Did Monsieur Andrada want to open old wounds? Was this not the hated image of one who had murdered many thousands of Haitian peasants in the aftermath of a border dispute? How could Monsieur Andrada justify his claim (in view of the inexplicable poster) that he had come to Haiti for tourism and pleasure?* I watched from a distance and did not, of course, intervene. I was not going to wait to see what happened, since I was determined to reach Villamayor before he did. Andrada's hands were trembling as he tried to rewrap the portrait; that was the last I saw. Would he spend the night in the headquarters of the police, to await further questioning? Or would he be allowed to go to a hotel under surveillance? In any event I was astonished and glad that I had been able to break away from him so easily.

It took me the better part of two broiling days to discover the exact whereabouts of Villamayor. It appeared he was living on the forsaken south coast, near the town of Caye Thomonde, with a growing household of eccentrics. I obtained this information from two persons who were themselves eccentric enough—the millionairess Barbara Swenson and her companion Edward Murphree, a retired soldier-of-fortune. They had followed Villamayor down, much to his displeasure. It was Barbara Swenson who owned the white yacht riding at anchor in the glittering bay, and who had rented the largest villa on the hillside above my hotel, thousands of feet above it in fact. There she entertained Haitian dignitaries and the large crew of squabbling exiles she had brought with her from California.

As for Villamayor—Barbara Swenson had known him for many years. And now in her eighties (but rejuvenated by many drugs and cures, by psychologists and quacks, by the laying on of hands and by the testicles of many beasts) she still incorrigibly hoped for an invasion of Santa Isabella, and the overthrow of The Protector. In her lucid dreams Villa-

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mayor loomed as the ideal provisional president of a liberated republic. Meanwhile for several years she had been supporting a patient optimistic man named Eduardo Gonzales, who from nine to five each day labored to produce a new constitution. Wherever she and Murphree went—from New York to California to Mexico, from Venezuela to Haiti—Gonzales went too, with his mounting collection of documents.

So I would go to Villamayor the next day. I arranged for a car and driver, who would take me more than halfway to Caye Thomonde. The driver in turn would find horses and a guide for the remainder of the trip. I was now more curious than ever to see Villamayor and his queer disciples, and anxious to be on my way. I felt I could overcome his distrust of journalists, on which Edward Murphree had insisted. I was not, after all, the average prying newspaperman. I even hoped to be Villamayor's guest for a few days, and come to know him fairly well.

But meanwhile I could not help feeling uneasy, even guilty, about poor Manuel Andrada the born incompetent. He had not, in his hopeful stubborn way, turned up at my hotel... which could only mean that he was being detained by the police. And he was, after all, a fellow human-being, however poor a sample. After forty-eight hours in Haiti I had heard enough about the brutalities of the secret police to be apprehensive for him. In Santa Isabella the political deviant or suspect disappears or is found dead, the victim of a trumped-up accident; the methods of repression are decisive. But those of Haiti, where mild torture often accompanies questioning, are bad enough.

So I set out to find some traces of Andrada, and at the police headquarters was referred to the Pension Bel Rêve. I found it at the end of a foul alley in the slums behind the Cathedral: a gloomy rotting villa and a small garden run wild. The proprietor consulted briefly with the taxi-driver, then showed me Andrada's room, and the bed that had not been slept in. It was such a room as only he could have discovered, pervaded by an odor of cheap cigars and ancient sweat, possibly by an odor of stale excrement from the

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corridor. Above the bed the face of The Protector glowered in the darkening afternoon, and magazines lay in disarray on the floor. On his first night, it appears, "the tourist Manuel Andrada" had got very drunk in his room and made disturbing, inexplicable noises. Then all yesterday he had acted most confused. The proprietor had the impression that Andrada was not fleeing the police but seeking them. Time and again he had rushed out into the city—after asking directions for this or that government office or *bureau de renseignements*—only to return in an hour or so, sweating heavily and with a baffled expression. He wanted to confer with "the authorities" who were concerned with missing persons, foreigners especially. By evening on that second day, however, he was asking different questions. He had begun to speak vaguely of a need for sexual activity. *Les divertissements sexuels, le plaisir...* The proprietor (when he finally understood Andrada's abominable French) referred him to the Ville des Fleurs, where an abundance of prostitutes would be found. That had been before dinner; Andrada had never returned.

This place of pleasure had been, I surmised, but a way-station on the road to jail. For Andrada, already suspect because of the portrait, would have asked too many clumsy questions. Nevertheless I found another taxi—this one operated by a lean and nervous negro with a bandaged ear—and went out to the Ville des Fleurs. The gingerbread houses and thatched wattled huts were sinking into weeds and wild grass. The outside walls were decorated with primitive drawings, but the violent red and yellow paint was peeling and flaking away. Women crouched in the doorways and made tired perfunctory appeals; others lay sprawled against the inside walls, creatures of every dark shade and race. They murmured in the gloom. Even the few white women in their silks had begun to adopt the peculiar Haitian posture, with the legs wide apart and bare to the thigh, but with the dress tucked decently between them. I could imagine what a swath Andrada must have cut in this small city of drowsing women, with his burning purpose and his lusts.

But none of the girls would admit having seen him. I went

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into hut after hut, stepping from dappled sunlight into the shadowy perfumed cubicles with their odors of vice. I described, gesturing, the coarse brown suit, and indicated with my finger that historic scar cutting down through an eyebrow. There was much giggling, and sometimes a rapid exchange of Creole between two of the girls, out of which I detected a reiterated name: *Odile*. Who, I asked at last, was Odile? Where was she? But the girls only shook their heads, and invited me to stay. My lean driver followed me from hut to hut, like a black wraith, thrusting in his brigand face with its bandaged ear, listening to my questions. I had almost reached the last hut when he volunteered his information.

"I know where he is, your friend. All the drivers know."

"You do? Why didn't you say so?"

"You did not ask me. You spoke only to the girls. Also the information is confidential. You will never find him yourself."

"How much will you take me there for?"

"I take you for four dollars."

And four dollars it was to be: for the short jolting ride back to the center of town, where I did in fact find Manuel Andrada, in a large one-room shack just off the Grande Rue, and not two hundred yards from the Pension Bel Rêve. His place of hidden joys, wedged between small shops with chalked signs, might have been the bare *atelier* and dwelling of a seamstress or cobbler, except for the soldier smoking lazily outside. He sat against the wall with a rusty rifle across his lap. And my first impression (as I looked in from the broken sidewalk) was of a dark kennel in which small black shapes seethed. Then I detected the faint shine and tinkle of bracelets, luminous as animal eyes. There was an odor of bodies and another odor of coffee, emanating from that breathing dark. At my knock, with the door already ajar and the last daylight falling on a black outstretched leg, someone lit a gas lamp. Then I saw Andrada. He was lying on a mattress in the very center of the room, awake but satiate and exhausted, his face blanched and remote. His head was

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propped up on the folded winter coat that now served him as a pillow. And the first black shapes I saw were not the one or even several girls I had expected but a brood of small naked infants, playing on the sawdust floor. There were other, larger shapes against the walls and in the farthest corner a wrinkled toothless crone with a pipe, who mumbled low protests. The room was full of negroes sitting against the walls.

"I knew you would come!" Andrada pulled himself up on one elbow: grateful, trying to rise or at least turn to face me. But he was exhausted, overwhelmed, ravaged: sucked and drained of his lusts. "You must get me out of here, Nicholas Clive. I have my mission to accomplish! And The Protector waits. Moreover, I need a priest who knows Spanish..."

"What's the matter with you? Can't you get up?"

"I'm too tired. Besides, I think I'm a prisoner. Isn't that soldier still out there? I don't understand these people at all. And they don't understand my French. There has been a terrible misunderstanding. I had of course expected privacy."

I went outside to speak to the policeman, who told me Andrada was free to go where he pleased. But he would, of necessity, be followed, since he had the aspect of one who made trouble. Then I went back inside and consulted one of the anonymous lean black shapes lounging against the wall. He told me they all looked upon Andrada as their "patron". Later still (having listened to Andrada's own account and even to the *placeé* herself, as she liked to call herself, the chosen one, tall and black and African) I could begin to see what had happened. And I could imagine the rest: beginning with Andrada's delighted discovery of the girl Odile, out at the Ville des Fleurs, and their wordless instant communication as he knelt at her feet. Then the scandalized watching of the other ones, the languid and silken girls. It had been love at first sight, a recognition by Andrada of his destined one. So without pause he had leaped upon her muttering Spanish endearments while one attendant girl feverishly cranked the phonograph and another went out

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for rum. His desire must have been appalling. And he was in no mood to delay the consummation of his love, after his weeks of frustration; he ripped off the precious suit.

Later, sodden with rum and pleasure, happily indifferent to the even larger ring of girls who now watched in astonishment and envy, Andrada found himself the center of some ceremonial rite. For he had uttered, among the Spanish endearments, certain fatal words overheard during his few days in Haiti. "*Moi*!" The pleased incredulous girl, tall and black, had pointed first to herself, then to the recumbent and dazed Andrada. Now it was her turn to kneel by his feet. Meanwhile, there was more rum; the black silken shapes came and went. At last there was an old negro in spectacles who squatted beside them lettering words on a piece of paper bordered with flowers: apparently a public scribe. Andrada happily signed this document. An hour later he found himself carried in a drunken procession of four taxis into town and to the one-room shack... from which brothers and sisters and parents and relatives were quickly evicted, after a hasty glance at the flowered document, carrying with them certain meagre possessions. In the extremity of Andrada's drunkenness there was little opportunity for the niceties. Still, he had entered unknowingly into the most venerable of Haitian institutions, descended from the old slave days. He now had his own established mistress to be cherished and loved. He fell asleep to the low beating of a drum, consoling as a heartbeat, and to the intense gratitude of the chosen one, swarming over him in the odorous dark. In his dreams his bones seemed to crack, under the wrench and groan of her thighs.

He had not understood all this at the time, or even the next morning when he awoke to a milky light entering their dusk, and to the cries of the hawkers in the street. The girl brought him coffee. But he did understand that he had entered into some kind of arrangement with her, and was expected to remain in the shack, to live there in fact. She moved proudly around the room, pointing to the three chairs and the cupboard and to the calendars and postcards on the walls. And

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it did seem adequate, the room, now that the family had departed. It was larger than his room at the Pension Bel Rêve, where the poster of The Protector had been left neatly hung on the wall. *Why not?* he wondered, as she came to him with coffee, cradling the cup in her hands. She knelt beside him and caressed him as he drank. Her mouth was only inches from his ear. It was the sort of thing he had awaited all his life; they made love again.

The next time he awoke, the girl was sitting on the mattress beside him, and a tall thin negro of perhaps thirty was rummaging in the small cupboard at their feet. He understood just enough French to make out that this was a brother, presumably returned to fetch certain articles left behind in the hasty exodus of the night before. Or was he bringing gifts? The intruder, who went on talking to the sister in a soft accusing voice, seemed to be folding carefully several shirts and placing them in a drawer. Andrada (staggering slightly, still sodden with the rum and pleasure) went to the front door, and saw the soldier lounged beside it, the rusty gun across his lap. The soldier touched the gun, and barked a command; Andrada went back inside. He was astonished to see the brother now lying against the wall: breathing heavily, already half asleep. The girl Odile (for he suddenly remembered the name forgotten during the night's holocaust) seemed untroubled by her brother's presence; she drew Andrada down beside her. The murmuring began again.

At one point during this episode of their lovemaking an old woman crept into the room, smoking a pipe. Andrada was flat on his back by now, tired and bruised and helpless, imprisoned by the girl's still raging limbs. Turning his head as for a gasping breath he noticed first the odor of tobacco rich as steaming dung, then saw the old woman moving stealthily along the wall toward a back corner, the witch's gown hanging in rags over fleshless bones, old and bent as time. She let herself down into that corner as by long habit, turning and turning like a dog before settling on her haunches. She nodded to him with a toothless grin, and resumed her muttering. Andrada was outraged. He tried in vain to sum-

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mon his spent strength and throw off his chosen burden. The most he could make of Odile's explanation was that the old woman, the grandmother, would be "glad to help."

It must have been noon at least when he awoke again. A white blazing sunlight streamed through the open door onto himself and the sawdust-covered floor. Friendly passers-by glanced in. The brother still slept without stirring, but the old witch was gone. In a corner the girl Odile was busily engaged in bathing her body from a small pail: a beautiful crouching body, glistening in the heat. There were also in the room, he noted, three black infants aged perhaps two to four, also naked and impossibly identical in shape and feature, playing quietly in a corner. Still another man watched from a far corner, grinning, the white teeth ghostly in that hot gloom. Another "brother." And there were presently three or four more. Andrada was horribly embarrassed. "*I found myself surrounded, Nicholas Clive. And of course I expected privacy.*" The family which had moved out so precipitously the night before had lost no time in returning. This time when he went to the front door the soldier was still there, but barefoot. He too intended to remain indefinitely. In the middle of the sidewalk, huddled over a brazier resting on three stones and stirring its doubtful contents, was the old woman ancient and toothless, the crone, grandmother and matriarch of the tribe. She would prepare the ceremonial banquet—the *griot* or conch stew or other delicacy, purchased on the newly-established credit of Andrada's future largesse —before returning to the appointed corner of the room where she dwelt and had her being, and mumbled her obscure complaints.

It was at about this time, he said—less than fifteen hours after the onset of his happiness—that Andrada began to wonder when I would discover and rescue him. He knew I would not "abandon" him completely.

But back at the Pension Bel Rêve, lying exhausted under The Protector's portrait, he was terribly ashamed.

"This is the third day, Nicholas Clive, and I have accomplished nothing at all. The police officials would not speak

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to me of Villamayor. The black dogs... Again and again I sat in anterooms, only to be refused admittance. And now I am too ashamed to confront those in the Consulate of Santa Isabella who might easily help me. I have squandered monies that belong to the nation. I deserve to be punished."

"Well, if this is what "gratification" does for you..."

"I know, Nicholas Clive, I know. But tomorrow is another day. Tell me what you have discovered."

I was not going to reveal my plans, of course, nor even the presence in Port-au-Prince of Barbara Swenson and her revolutionary menage. Let him make his own discoveries... I watched him lying there under The Protector's stern paternal gaze.

"No," I said. "We can talk about it tomorrow. I'll come around and see you in the afternoon."

"Very good, Nicholas Clive. I am glad you collaborate at last."

But by the following afternoon I had already crossed the island, and had already met Villamayor.

I will not speak, here, of my first days with Villamayor, in that crumbling villa near Caye Thomonde. That is another story. But meanwhile I was surprised that Andrada did not join us. I had hoped at most for a twenty-four hour start. It was hard to believe Andrada, even Andrada the congenital failure, could fail to discover Villamayor's whereabouts. I wondered what his reaction had been to his discovery that I had once again given him the slip. What dismal speculations ensued? For all I knew he might have returned in despair to the Ville des Fleurs, where a new cycle of debauchery and deception could set in: devotion and excess and guilt. He would regard himself, then, as more than ever unworthy of his high mission. Confession would prove unavailing.

Well, I was to hear very soon, and from his own lips, of his progressive discoveries of my "treachery." He was still much too conscious of his failure to go to the Consulate of Santa Isabella, where he could have learned everything he

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needed to know. He would not dare face them! Instead he went to the Haitian police, learned the name of my hotel, and went there. And of course he did everything the hardest, the most ridiculous way. He entered the hotel by the kitchen, flourished a handful of *gourdes* by way of bribe, and demanded to be shown my room. *La chambre de Monsieur Clive...* The bribed and dull-witted cook took him to the dark upstairs hall, where for over an hour Andrada stationed himself by what had once been my door, waiting for me to wake up. I had not responded to his first gentle knocking. At noon he began to knock more loudly and ten minutes later broke into the room, thanks to the expert use of a small pocket-knife. The room was empty, there was no baggage: I was gone! Later, Andrada told me of a sudden weight of sadness and dismay falling upon his heart, as he took in the signs of flight and betrayal. Yes: I had left the hotel without a word, whose very journey here had, in a way, been conceived by himself. His American friend Nicholas Clive, who had rescued him from jail! And all the money he had spent, drawn as it were coin by burning coin from The Protector's own pocket, now irrevocably gone! For a few minutes Andrada stood quite still, his mind vacant. It might have been the numbness of one who had discerned the dead-end of a road.

Then he went downstairs and found Bernard, who confirmed that I had paid my bill and left. Where to? The proprietor shook his great fat shoulders. "*I do not inquire into the sanity of clients who vanish into the interior of Haiti.*" Pressing more narrowly, Andrada learned for the first time of the material existence in Port-au-Prince of Barbara Swenson and Edward Murphree, possessed of both yacht and villa. "*Barbara Swenson! But of course, your friend Clive knows her well!*" Bernard pointed a stubby finger at the white yacht anchored in the harbor. "*You do not know Barbara Swenson? But everyone knows her. She is preparing a revolution!*" Andrada felt a dizziness as from too long a station in the sun; this was the second outrage of the day. So! Barbara Swenson had not only followed Villamayor to Haiti but been seen by Nicholas Clive his friend—the legendary trouble-maker of the Cali-

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fornia ranch, the financier of grudge-bearers and exile malcontents! Once again Andrada felt himself beyond his depths.

Nevertheless, he resumed the weary trail of patriotic endeavor. He made a rapid vain trip to the dock and yacht's dinghy, from which he was referred to the hillside villa. Then another ferociously expensive taxi-ride at The Protector's expense: coin after burning coin. He arrived as Barbara Swenson and her dazed guests were coming to the end of their long poolside luncheon; waiters circulated with liqueurs. It appears no one noticed at first the small man in his incongruous winter suiting, who moved embarrassed among the tables filled with what he called "the conspirators" —the slipshod Yanquis and burnished exiles in snowy guayaveras and even, no doubt, a few traitorous compatriots. Also the high negro officials in immaculate white; everyone was slightly drunk. Andrada caught snatches of revolutionary conversation as he walked past the tables; there were evil women indecently clad; dresses slipped from the shoulders. As he came to the last table Andrada, truly frightened now, began to murmur my name in French: "*S'il vous plait, où est Nicholas Clive? Nicholas Clive, he is a young man known to everyone.*" Here, nearing the edge of the balcony, he encountered Edward Murphree, who welcomed him warmly. "*Nicholas Clive, mais naturellement je le connais!*" Andrada sat down. He found himself presented, before he had time to make his own patriotism clear, to a slender man of scholarly mien: the constitutionalist Eduardo Gonzales. Yes, Murphree had from the first moment mistaken Andrada for an antagonist of The Protector. A grudge-bearer and malcontent!

Much later—telling me about this hour that lasted scarcely twenty minutes—Andrada refused to go into detail. He knew only that he had stumbled in broad daylight into the very hotbed of revolutionary and irreligious fanaticism, brash and unconcealed. He sat with Murphree and Gonzales in anguish: watching the five tables at which men and women sat back with half-closed conspiratorial eyes, murmuring subversive thoughts. But he couldn't hear what they were saying because of Gonzales, who had begun to speak rapidly

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in wheezing tones of the rudiments of constitutional change. *Unilateral settling of border disputes, the greed of the church, dissolution of monopolies, separation of judicial power from executive prerogative...* the dry voice went on unappeased. When Gonzales paused to sip his glass of soda-water, Andrada pressed his questions again. But Murphree dismissed them with a shrug. He was momentarily disappointed to hear I had disappeared from my hotel without leaving word. But his mind soon wandered to other things: to the vacillations of the French in North Africa, to the fleshpots of Aruba and Trinidad. Gonzales had subsided into an indignant silence, as Murphree went on. "*So he left without consulting me, to search for his lost Villamayor? Tant pis!*" Murphree shook his reddening face and white delicate hair. "*Ça m'est absolument égal, Monsieur Andrada.* Let Villamayor sulk in his tent! Let Clive go off chasing him! I don't care. There are other and more faithful leaders, who devote eight hours a day to the cause. The sea is large and deep, there are other fish in the sea!"

Such was the beginning (and temporarily the end) of Andrada's introduction to Barbara Swenson's household. *The sea is large and deep...* Glancing over his shoulder, Andrada followed the sweep of Murphree's eloquent arm in the direction of the sea thousands of feet below. The sky was a vast blue expanse in which the huge dim island of Gonave floated improbably, directly before their eyes. Closer at hand the balcony on which they sat seemed to drop off directly into infinite space. "*Nicholas Clive!*" Andrada wailed, recollecting. "*Believe me, I was utterly discomposed by the evil atmosphere and the hateful phrases of gross political subversion. Also by our terrible position on that balcony. That island floating in the sky! I was possessed of a vertigo.*" He felt himself about to be engulfed. He did not remember getting up from the table, but it is evident that he did—overturning a glass in his haste, leaving without a word, rushing past the tables of conspirators and out into the blazing street. He leaped into the nearest taxi. Moments later he was descending swiftly toward Port-au-Prince (urging greater speed on the driver,

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but unable to remember the name of his hotel); and toward the final outrage of the day.

Of this he spoke with shamed dark eyes on the floor, and on his now cracked and ruined cardboard shoes: his eyes down, but the white gash through the brow regarding me, placid and unmalevolent, his body faintly trembling. He spoke of it on one of those long fumbling conversations we later had in his room in Caye Thomonde. The third outrage and the worst! For what were his sensations to be but those of a trapped and chained victim walking the treadmill of his lusts? Or he was reminded of the donkeys crushing out the cane on the older plantations, and receiving a ritual blow at each round. The taxi-driver, in any event, knew Andrada by sight, as most of the drivers now did, and knew fragments of his recent history. Who did not know him, since his exploits had astonished even the bored girls of the Ville des Fleurs? I surmise the driver must have taken one look at the scarred burning face rushing toward him, felt in panic the great wrench of his taxi as Andrada leaped in, heard the first incoherent stammerings... and drawn his immoral conclusions. On he sped, motor shut off and brakes recklessly screeching, down into the city's heat. The taxi went directly to the dwelling of Odile and her relatives, to the place of hidden joys wedged between small shops identified by signs chalked on the walls. On the boardwalk in front of the house the old crone was back at her pot. The family (whose new credit with *boulangerie* and *epicerie* of the district had already failed) greeted Andrada with astonishment and joy. They pulled him out of the taxi, who was babbling incoherently now, his small arms waving. He was swarmed under and drawn into the gloom, a speck carried on the black tide. It was well after dark, he said, before he made his escape.

All this he was to tell me: sombrely staring at his shoes, seeing nothing at all humorous in his renewed "moral defeat." "*Why do you laugh, Nicholas Clive, to contemplate the ruin of a friend? I was again snared in the coils of lust.*" And the consequences—the consequences at least of that visit to Barbara Swenson's—were swift and serious enough. For the next

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morning he received an unexpected yet overdue visit from his compatriot Miguel Rubinez, more commonly known as "The Cripple." Heretofore Andrada had feared chiefly the impatience of one Eufemio Rodriguez in his dark New York office, and of various uniformed authorities behind polished desks in the capital city. They would watch him from afar; in time his failures would be known. But there was nothing remote about the descent of Miguel Rubinez from a taxi—which Andrada watched from the front porch of his pension, where he had just finished his coffee.

The crutches touched earth inquisitively but with confidence. Manuel Andrada had never seen Miguel Rubinez, The Cripple. But he knew at once this was he from his manner of descending from a car, which was legendary throughout the Caribbean: first the deliberate crutches probing and sliding out like pale angry claws, then the vast improbable hind-quarters ballooning, they in turn preceding by long moments the thighs, the carapace of a hump, the shaved neck, the white porcine face, bloated and still averted. The descent (a backward movement) must have required some minutes, during which Andrada waited with horror, shame and an acute sense that he was being honored. For The Cripple (protector of the weak against their own backslidings) did not concern himself with unimportant men, in his endless voyages to oversee The Protector's agents, and to conclude the deserved punishment of traitors and critics.

"*Imagine my dismay, Nicholas Clive, to find myself visited by Miguel Rubinez himself. The Cripple! The guardian of purity and enemy of backsliders! I who am such a little man, uneducated really, obeying orders I hardly understand... In the same moment I became aware of unexpected honor and terrible disgrace. I knew at last the magnitude of my failure. What else could this mean but a merited suspicion of weakness and impure resolve? Yes, I thought I was suspected of ingratitude too—ingratitude! —to the savior of the national economy. That man's face was without expression as he spoke. It resembled a dead white fish found on the sand from which the skin has been removed. We went to my room. Miguel Rubinez led the way, in fact. He did not have to ask which room*

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was mine. For a long time we stood under the fatherly benevolence of The Protector's portrait, while I received his calm unpassionate warning. I deserved, of course, every word of chastisement I received. Also The Cripple gave me new instructions. And what I had to procure from Justo de Villamayor was now so much more than I had ever anticipated or hoped or feared. Then he left me. And all night I wondered whether a richly merited retribution would come, in spite of his generous commands!"

Over the last part of his interview with The Cripple Andrada drew a discreet veil of generality. Nor did he clarify why no deviant or traitor marked for punishment had ever shot Rubinez as he descended laboriously from a car, or awkwardly emerged from an elevator into an apartment hallway, or into the aghast victim's room, the crutches fluttering and probing ahead. An extraordinarily large and slowmoving target. Yet I had read enough of Santa Isabella's history to know why even the briefest interviews inspired a sweating terror—quite as though the probing awkward crutches would mysteriously become swift whirling blades or thin expert instruments for the gouging of vulnerable parts.

I knew as anyone conversant with Santa Isabella would know. For the history of Miguel Rubinez ("The Cripple") went back to the strong-arm squads and bloody early days of the regime, when retribution had to be both public and mysterious, and show no fear of reprisal. Thus Rubinez rode in the famous *Carro de la Muerte* of the 1930's: the great red Pierce Arrow touring car unprotected by bullet-proof or other glass, and that must have looked forty feet long to its victims. Sometimes the deviant would be shot to death by the armed occupants of the car. But this was rare. As a rule the car would stop before the victim's house, conspicuous, the driver and his passengers chatting pleasantly, Rubinez among them though even then of bloated expressionless face. The neighbors would peer shocked from behind shutters hastily closed. Afterward, it might take days or even weeks to learn what that deliberate pause of the great Pierce Arrow meant: the fatal automobile accident in some remote ravine

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or "remorseful suicide" in jail, the death by drowning in a swimming pool, or (worst of all) the early morning discovery in some village sixty or seventy miles away of an unidentified and naked corpse, hanging in the public square. But all that was past; the great car now rested in a barn on one of The Protector's estates, its retributory labors done. It belonged to what Andrada called the nation's "Period of Rectification." Ever since the second war Rubinez had worked abroad, probing the loyalty of The Protector's employees and visiting punishment on the most guilty of the exiles. The slow advance of the crutches down an institutional corridor could mean death by smothering in the bed of a Havana hospital, or by strangling in a Mexican jail.

Andrada went into no such details of violence. For him, Miguel Rubinez was a moral force, and he was concerned with his own now exposed unworthiness. "*He came to me as one who for twenty-five years had weighed the merits of the patriotic ones. I wanted to prove to him my fervent loyalty to The Protector and my untarnished love of the homeland. But I didn't know how to begin*!" So in the first minute Andrada behaved as a petty thief might, when challenged by a minor police official: he took out his wallet, and showed Rubinez his documents. While the expressionless face of a white bloated fish stared on, Andrada dealt them onto his table until the top was covered: his passport and *Cédula Personal de Identitad*, his Certificate of Good Conduct and discharge from military service, his exequatur and authorization to carry a revolver, his certificate of piety, and all his other worn cards of membership and loyalty: the now yellowed badge of membership in the Youth's Prefect Corps and in the Catholic Youth Association and in the Service of Informers and Inspectors, also the stamped form from the *Comisión Depueradora de Empleados Públicos*, the driver's license and letter identifying him as Envoy Extraordinary and emissary of the National Archives. His hands must have sweat and trembled as he shuffled and spread the cards until at last the high effeminate voice of The Cripple interrupted him:

"What, imbecile, are you doing?"

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"But Señor Rubinez! These are my documents. My loyalties, my identifications..."

"I know who you are, fool."

Miguel Rubinez, manipulating the crutches with immense difficulty, took a turn about the room. With one crutch he jabbed thoughtfully at Andrada's small cardboard suitcase, testing the strength of the material. Then he swung himself back.

"So, inadequate, what have you to say in your defense?"

"I am a little man, a humble one." Andrada found himself trembling, and talking much too fast. "I am not to blame for my sexual irregularities, Señor Rubinez. A madness overcomes me, I have an imperfect biological inheritance from my father... Also I was overcome by the very number of those negroes who simply snatched me out of the taxi. I didn't want to go there at all. Consider that all the time I said nothing to the driver. I was upset and possessed by a vertigo, I could not remember the name of my hotel!"

Miguel Rubinez shifted his weight to his left leg. He swung the right crutch deftly, striking Andrada just below the knee.

"Hein? What is all this gibberish about negroes? You are entrusted for a high mission and cannot remember the name of your hotel? Tell me, Andrada—do you consider yourself adequate?"

"Certainly not."

"And how do you justify your act of dining with known enemies of The Protector? That woman Señorita Swenson has financed grudge-bearers and hot-headed opportunists throughout the Americas. She is a destroyer of established order."

"I didn't dine with her, Señor Rubinez. I left almost at once."

"And that itself was ridiculous and dangerous, your behavior was without subtlety. It was reported to us almost at once by the chief of police. Do you realize you lack dignity?"

"I felt sick, Señor Rubinez. Moreover, I was filled with revulsion and loathing for the evil political atmosphere of subversion and chaos."

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"You are a fool, Manuel Andrada." The face, white and porous as the exposed underside of a fish, was still expressionless in its service of The Protector. "Also, you are unworthy of such a high mission. How long more must The Protector wait for this infamous manuscript of Justo de Villamayor? And the National Library? And the Services of Security? How long must they wait? Justo de Villamayor will not come to you with the evil manuscript in his hand. When are you going to see him?"

"At once."

"Then you know where he is?"

"Not exactly."

The Cripple took another angry cumbersome turn about the room, striking randomly at the furniture.

"Andrada, you are inadequate. My own recommendation to the homeland would be to return you at once to Santa Isabella for sentry duty on the docks. You are a catastrophic mistake. However, I must obey the orders I receive. So I will tell you where Villamayor is. Everyone in this country knows except you. I will also convey certain new instructions, related to the historic fact that The Protector can be all-forgiving. There is always a place at his table for the repentant and weary Prodigal Son. But the present situation is intolerable. What must The Protector or his nephew think of the continuing presence abroad of Justo de Villamayor, capable of writing anything and of a known weakness of character, subject to subversive temptation? So. I will give you your new instructions, and you will be on your way before noon. Is that entirely understood? If not..."

In the silence Andrada found himself staring directly and from some six inches away at the rubber-mounted end of a crutch. The other end of it lay against The Cripple's cheek, who closed one eye in the manner of a man aiming a rifle. He noticed with alarm a pinkness invade the white porous flesh, and the flatulent lips begin to tremble. Then the entire face of Miguel Rubinez was in motion, the features and flesh struggling in the semblance of a thick jelly, the pink skin now veined with purple that had once been porous and white. The

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ensuing laugh resembled, in some respects, a shrill female scream.

So it was "entirely understood"... But over the rest of that interview (following upon the alarming laugh) Manuel Andrada drew the veil. He had too much respect for Miguel Rubinez to betray such professional secrets to me. For Miguel Rubinez was, like Villamayor, already an historical figure, part of the homeland's heritage. An indispensable cog in the wheel of national reinvigoration, both moral and economic. After the interview, Andrada followed Rubinez to the taxi and respectfully watched him crawl into it, backward, the gross hindquarters first and the now calmed and white porcine face last. He watched the taxi swing away with mingled pride and shame... shame that the visit had been necessary. Watching the taxi, still cognizant of the crutch's blow below his knee, Andrada felt purified and renewed. "*A fresh start, Nicholas Clive! I was returning to the true path I had left.*"

Then he returned to pack his things, and for the ceremonial wrapping of the portrait; by noon he had set out. I can imagine him making resolutions as his taxi moved into the suburbs of Port-au-Prince, and up into the brown hills: he was leaving Odile behind, he would leave behind failure, animality and lust. By three o'clock he reached the place where the trail to Caye Thomonde broke off from the road, and it was necessary to leave the taxi. Here Andrada, after much bickering, rented a very small horse, to be preceded down the trail by a tall and scornful guide whose clothes hung in rags.

Thus he descended toward us—toward Villamayor and me —through the blazing afternoon and the jungle: he was excited by the prospect of meeting another of his country's great man. Two in one day, it was an honor beyond his dreams! But also he was alarmed by the emptiness of the path. For he had come, after his brief stay, to distrust intensely the citizens of Haiti. He must have wondered what new evil and snare lay in wait to weaken his resolve.

And of course he did not know how many citizens were

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preceding him down that empty steaming path... to report his coming to us. They straggled into the clearing, came toward us up the ruined alley gesticulating, imitating Andrada's appearance and his chattels. They were much bemused by the spectacle of a man on horseback of such solemn expression, and who had what appeared to be a small platform strapped to his back, done up in expensive brown paper and rising high above his head.

MEDITATIONS ON A WOMAN'S VOICE

for Germaine Montero

Once, along the empty streets of your voice,
I saw a ruby-throated hummer
Defy the air, and sunlight smoke with choice
And dappled fragrances of summer.

The bird, flashing, whirled over the idle lawn,
Caught in the lift and beck of flowers.
He stopped, swayed, flickered a moment, and was gone.
Somewhere a clock shook down its hours.

Woman, what was it, then, spoke in that lean
Wind off the sea, bringing shadows
And people to the streets? It passed, unseen,
Down failing distances and meadows.

As its chill rolled up the sagging piers, and brusque
Row-houses hunkered in their sheeting,
I watched the swallows stitch the nervous dusk,
And felt, in my eyes, my dark heart's beating.

—ROBERT PATRICK DANA

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THE SCULPTOR GUSTAV SEITZ

by Hans Kinkel

The sculptor Gustav Seitz has been living and teaching in Hamburg since 1958. He enjoys travelling and does a lot of it. Seitz paid his first visit to Paris in 1928. At that time he did something which for a young and unknown artist was unusual: he called on Maillol and Despiau. That meeting with the classic modern French sculptors was more than a mere incident for Seitz. It had the effect of clarifying his own position. The painterly treatment of surface, the delight in telling a story, the play of light and the charm of the passing moment led to a stricter, more tangible form, and to the desire for three-dimensional structure and volume.

Seitz comes from Mannheim; he was born in 1906. In Berlin, his most important teacher was Wilhelm Gerstel, and his first, decisive proselyte and patron was Alfred Flechtheim, who achieved fame and fortune as one of the most active intermediaries between French and German art. As long ago as 1932 the Mannheim *Kunstverein* presented a large-scale exhibition of work by Seitz, assembling 45 sculptures and 60 drawings. His first museum purchase occurred in the same year. Today, sculptures and drawings by Seitz may be found in all the great museums and private collections in Europe.

A new and significant period for Seitz began with his journey to Greece and Egypt in 1934. It exemplifies the aim for a grand, larger-than-life form which Seitz has realised in his work — meaningfully and impressively. In 1939, Curt Valentin (later of New York) assembled an exhibition called *Geist der Antike in neuerer Zeit — The ancient spirit in modern times*. This was in the Buchholz Gallery, Berlin. The exhibition began with Delacroix and concluded with young German sculptors such as Hans Mettel and Gustav Seitz. And in 1940 Bruno E. Werner published a treatise entitled *Deutsche Plastik der Gegenwart — Present-day German sculpture* — which was banned and seized four weeks after it appeared. Werner became Cultural Attaché

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to the German Embassy in Washington between 1952–1961. In his book, he described Seitz as a man with his own, assured, individual style.

The years 1940–1945 appear in the sculptor's biography above the laconic summary: "Unproductive". Seitz shared the general fate of his generation: war and prison-camp. In 1943, a bomb completely demolished his atelier in Berlin; everything he had produced before that date was lost. Seitz is living testimony to the thesis that a sculptor only finds himself when he reaches the age of forty. After the end of the war, this vital talent moved from the domain of miniature, sculptured figures to that of monumental forms. The Maillol influence receded; the voluminous shapes were mastered in the struggle towards a personal form. Seitz began to give more emphasis to articulate construction; the lucid, insinuating charm of his statuettes yielded to the rationalised ordering of sculptural themes. Yet this did not upset his relationship to objects. In this connexion, Seitz is one of the few German sculptors of his generation who has regarded the temptation to produce sentimental art, to "please the public", with a creative distrust; and one who in spite of fashions and manifestos has remained true to himself, without thereby seeming imitative or reactionary. Seitz has said, "In my work, I always proceed from Nature, which is all around me. My only stimulus comes from its inexhaustible wealth of forms." Alfred Hentzen, Seitz' friend and Director of the Hamburg *Kunsthalle*, has rightly said of him, "Academicism is fundamentally foreign to his work."

The natural storehouse of figurative forms serves Seitz both as stimulus and instrument for his "constructed" sculpture. This sculptor's striving after logic, measure and order may be seen in his strictly composed studies of proportion. In the work on these sheets, whose interrelated themes reveal that one of his forebears was Dürer, Seitz respects the frontiers between the organic and the techtonic, between the world of natural appearances and that of formal abstraction. What interests him is the interior, invisible frame within the human form, which has such decisive influence both on the construction and the effect of any "artistic figure".

Seitz, who since the end of the war has been teaching in German art schools, is a draughtsman-sculptor of the first order. His busts combine authenticity with the demands of "rounded" self-contained form; they display a marvellous feeling for particular individuals (Brecht) and at the same time a rare capacity in the imaginative sphere (Villon).

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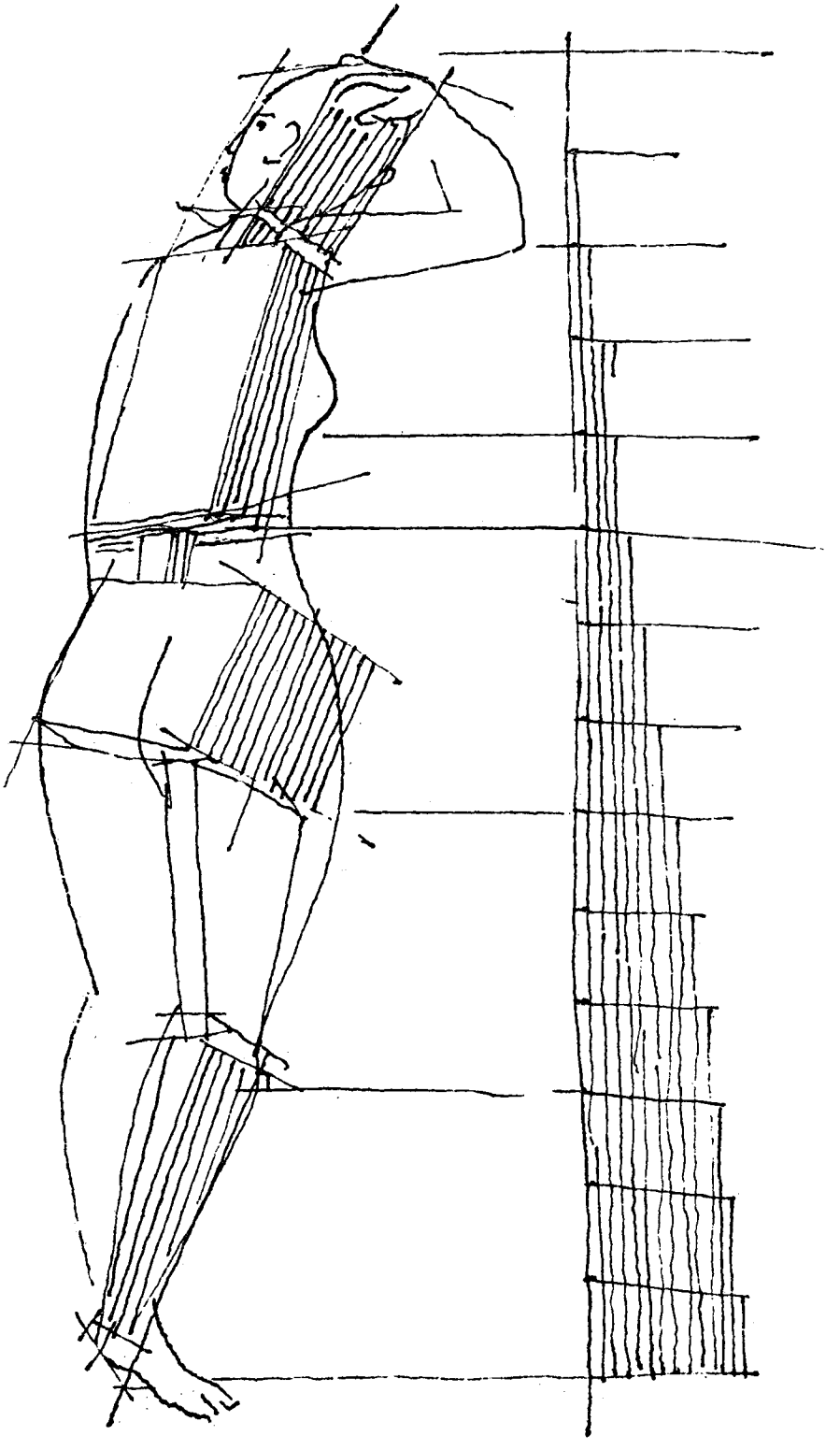

Federzeichnung. Studie. 1955

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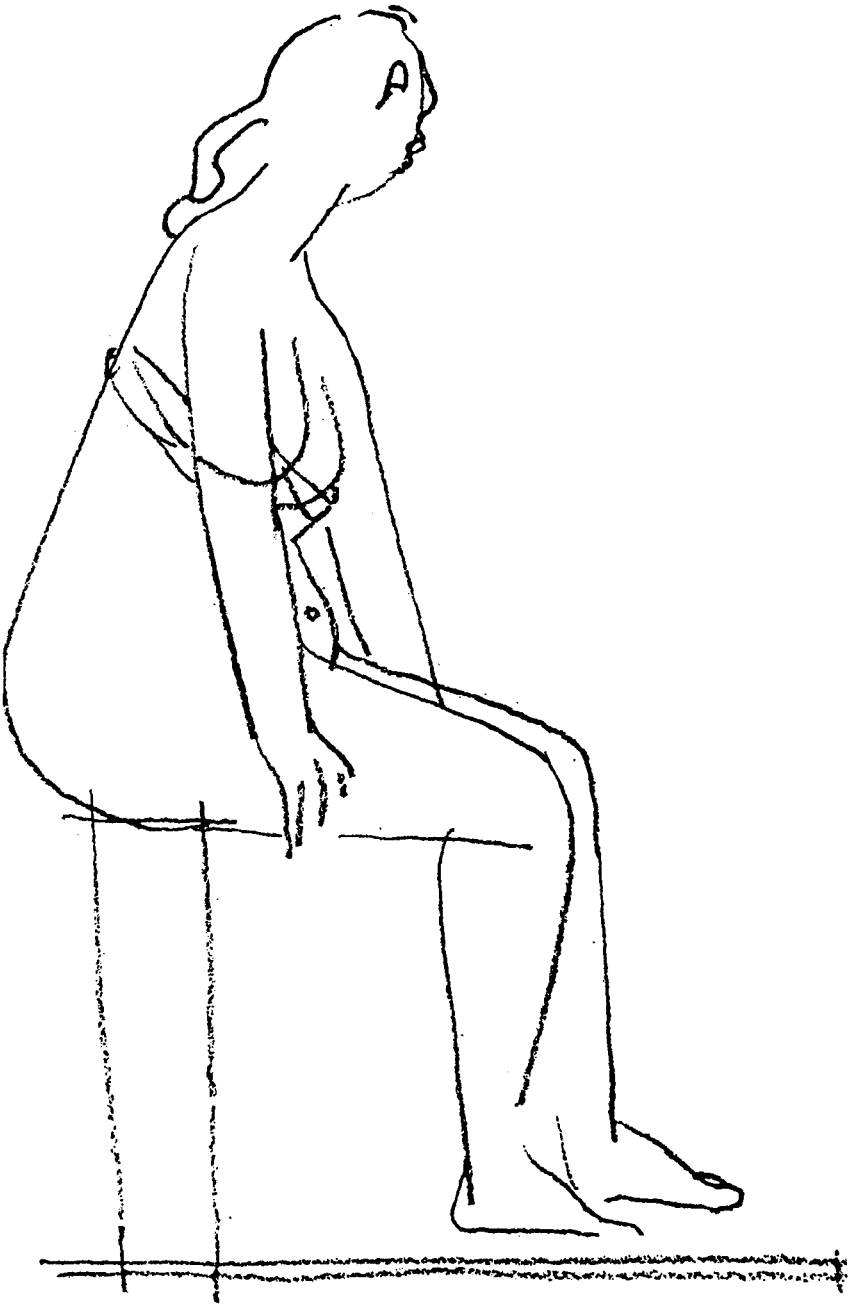

Bleizeichnung. Sitzende.

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Federzeichnung. Thomas Mann. 1954.

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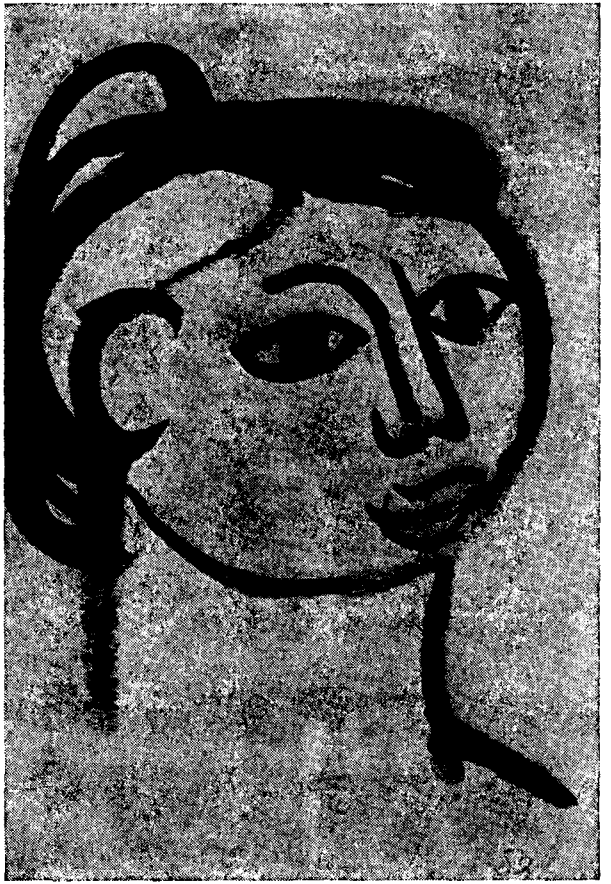

Pinselzeichnung Kopf einer Malerin 1961

Pinselzeichnung. Kopf eines Malers. 1961.

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Bleizeichnung. Zwei Frauen. 1958.

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Bleizeichnung. Liebespaar.

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Bleizeichnung. Kopf.

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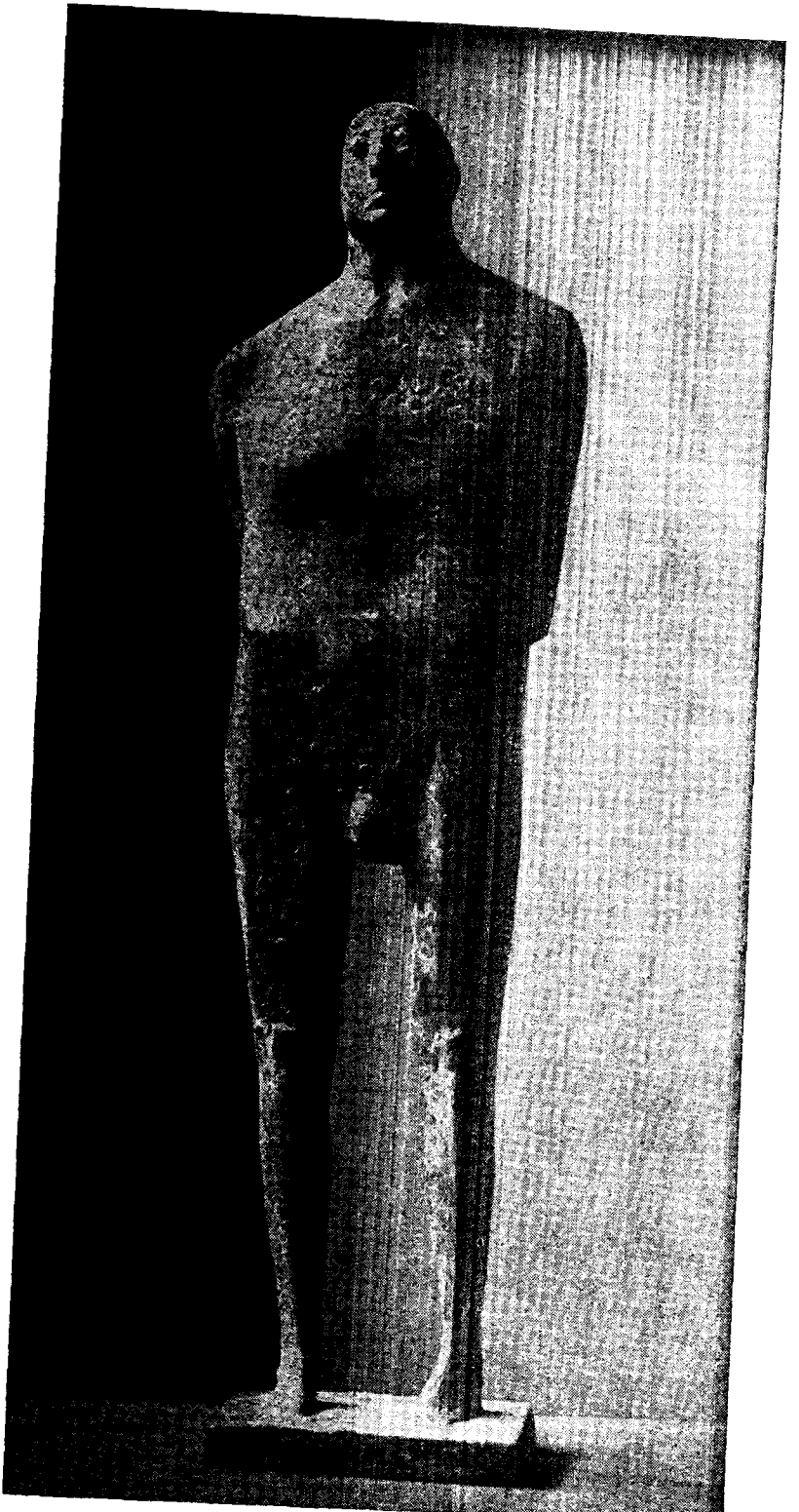

Bronze. Schauspieler. (Height 63 cm). 1961.

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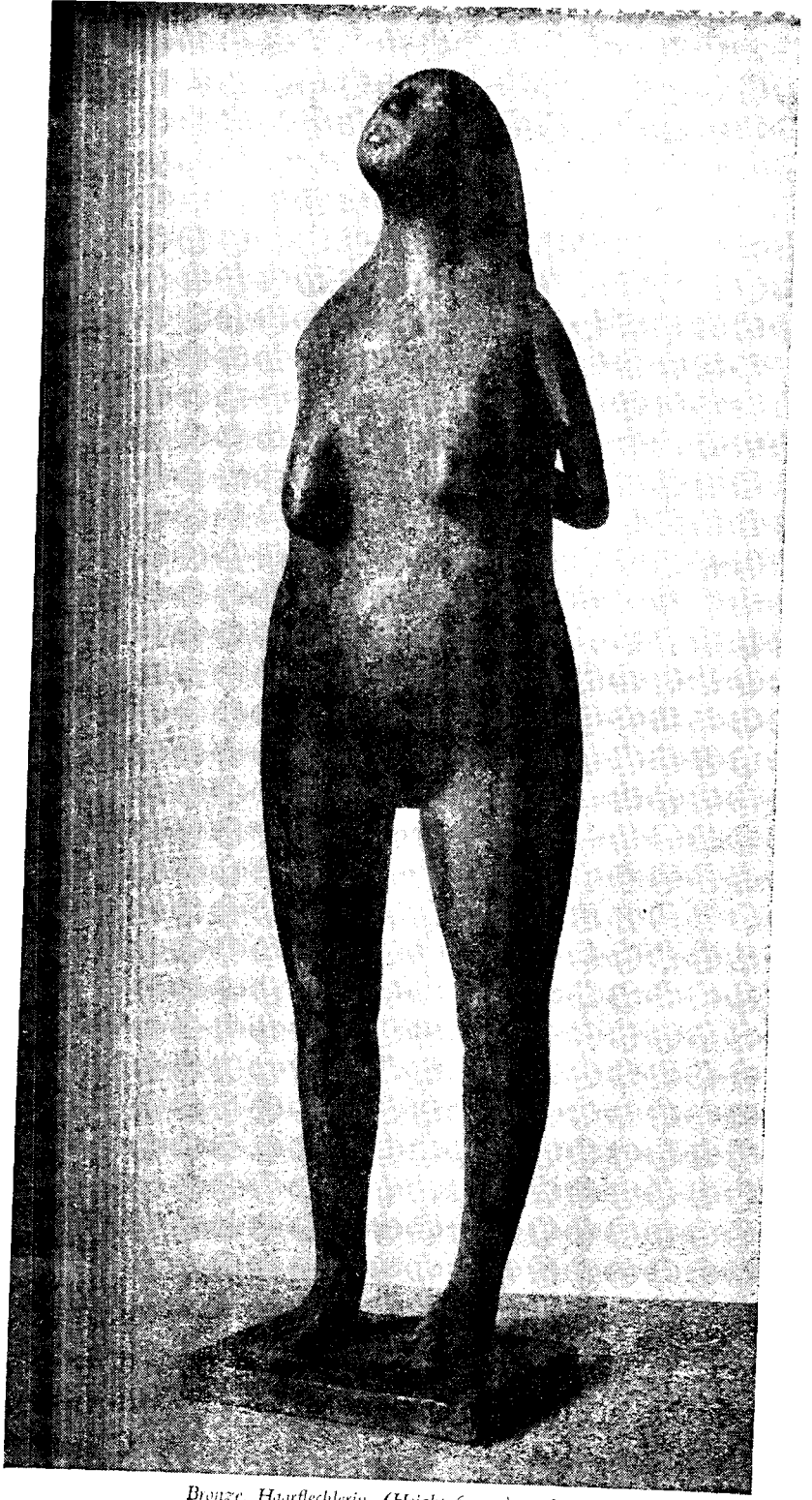

Bronze. Haarflechterin. (Height 61 cm). 1961.

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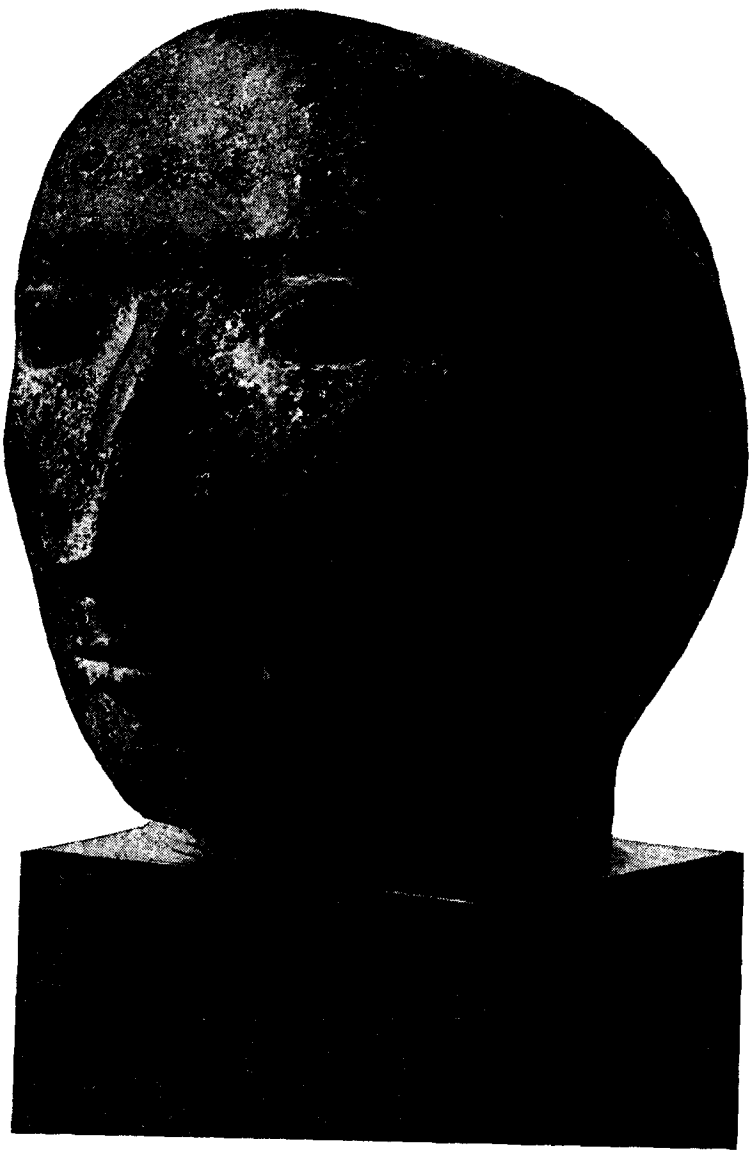

Bronze. François Villon. (Height 20 cm). 1949, 1961.

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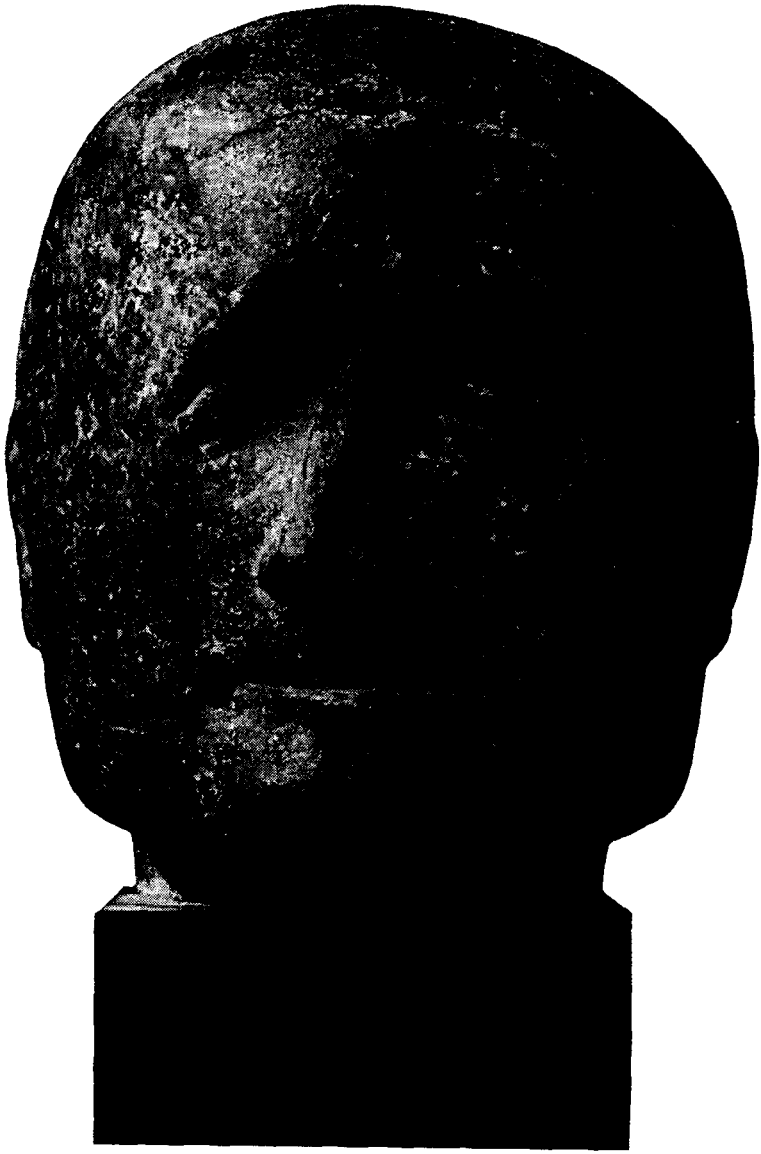

Bronze. Bert Brecht. (Lifesize, height 21 cm). 1959.

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TO BERTHOLT BRECHT

I've heard that you said, when a scene you had revised
Still didn't suit a man you used to know,
"But I am not Kafka!" What artist hasn't sized
Himself in the dwindling lacquer row
Of chinese dolls that, with no loss of face,
Can be out back inside one another now
And only a fool quarrel about his place.

There are such ranks; and yet I quarrel with
Those who have put a price on mere despair,
Ranking a man as he can fetch up death
And senselessness, and finding you famous so.
You called your foe by name: a naive faith.
It is a naive disillusion, everywhere
Fudging the good and bad, we must call foe.

The truth is hidden as cunningly from one
Time as another; what they change is the decoys,
And it takes a wily man to use the gun.
I think you would not be fooled by our bully-boys
Who say, "As Brecht said, I live in an age of blood".
You might stop with an oath their shrill, untimely noise:
Evil is nothing until it touches good.

—WILLIAM MEREDITH

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From HOW IT IS

a new novel by Samuel Beckett

here then I quote on part three how it was after Pim how it is part three and last at last towards which, lighter than air an instant flop fallen so many vows sighs prayers without words ever since the first word I can hear it the word how

no time left I say it as I hear it murmur it in the mud I'm sinking sinking fast that's too strong no head left imagination spent no breath left

the vast part both near and far the old today of the extreme old even the humming-bird known as the passing moment all that

the vast past even the humming-bird it comes from the left I watch it fly lightning semi-circle clockwise then the next then then or eyes closed it's preferable head bowed or not before the storm brief blanks good moments black blanks then zzzz the next all that

all that nearly blank that was so adorned a few traces that's all seeing who I always more or less so little so little there but there little there but there no choice

before Pim long before with Pim vast tracts of time kinds of thoughts same family divers doubts emotions too yes emotions some with tears yes tears motions too and movements both parts and whole as when he sets out to seek out the whole of him sets out to seek out the true home

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there then more or less more of old less of late very little these last times they're the last extremely little hardly at all a few seconds on and off enough to mark a life several lives crosses everywhere indelible traces

all that nearly blank nothing to get out of it almost nothing nothing to put into it that's the saddest that would be the saddest imagination declining having reached the bottom what one calls sinking one is tempted

or ascending heaven at last no place like it in the end

or not stirring that too that's defendable half in the mud half out

no head left in any case hardly any no heart left just enough to be glad a little glad to be so little there and sinking a little at last having reached the bottom

a little cheerful the less you're there the more you're cheerful when you're there less tears a little less when you're there words lacking all lacking less tears for lack of words lack of food even birth it's lacking all that makes you cheerful it must be all that a little more cheerful

how it was that's lacking before Pim with Pim all lost almost all nothing left almost nothing fortunately it's done nothing left but after how it was after Pim how it is vast stretch of time before Pim with Pim vast tracts of time a few seconds on and off added up vast stretch eternity same scale of magnitude nothing there almost nothing

clench the eyes I quote on not the blue the others behind see something somewhere after Pim nothing left but that a breath in a head nothing left but a head nothing in it almost nothing but breath pant pant one hundred to the minute hold it let it be held ten seconds fifteen seconds hear something try and hear a few old words after Pim how it was how it is quick

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Pim quick after Pim before he vanishes never was only me me Pim how it was before me with me after me quick

a sack bravo colour of mud in the mud colour of its surroundings having assumed it always had it one or the other ask nothing more what else it could be that thing possibly be so many things say sack old word first to come one syllable k at the end ask no more all would vanish a sack that will do the word the thing it's a possible thing in this world so little possible yes world what more can you ask a possible thing see it name it name it see it that's enough and rest I'll be back no back no choice some day

stop panting say what you hear see it say you see it an arm colour of mud in the mud the hand in the sack quick say an arm then another say another arm see it stretched taut like too short to reach now add a hand fingers splayed stretched taut monstrous nails all that say you see all that

a body what matter say a body see a body all the rear white originally some light spot still say grey of hair still growing that's enough a head say a head say you've seen a head all that seen all that a sack with food a body entire still alive yes living stop panting let it stop ten seconds fifteen seconds hear this breath gage of life hear it said say you hear it good pant on

on and off as if borne on the wind but not a breath sharp and faint God's old clapper old mill threshing the void or in another mood as though it changed great shears of the black old hag older than the world born of night click clack click clack two threads every second five every two never mine

no more I'll hear no more see no more yes I must to make an end a few more old words find a few more not quite so old as when Pim part two those are done never were but old too vast stretch of time this voice these voices as if borne on all the winds but not a breath another antiquity a little more recent stop panting let it stop ten seconds fifteen seconds a

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few old words on and off string them together make phrases

a few old images always the same no more blue the blue is done never was the sack the arms the body the mud the dark living hair and nails all that

my voice no objection back at last a voice back in my mouth at last my mouth no objection a voice at last in the dark the mud unimaginable tracts of time

this breath hold this breath let it be held once twice per day and night the time that means to those under whom and all above and all about the earth turns and all turns who hasten so from one goal to the next that but for this breath I would fancy I hear their hastening feet hold it let it be held ten seconds fifteen seconds try and hear

of this old tale quaqua on all sides then in me bits and scraps try and hear a few scraps two or three each time per day and night string them together make phrases more phrases the last how it was after Pim how it is something wrong there end of part three and last

(Translated from the French by the author)

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AT THE CORNER LIGHT
(San Francisco)

Fillmore alleyway window frame fat woman,
drunken, at kitchen greasy oil-clothed table
half gallon carton of milk and a fifth. Dark,
wrinkled, thick knuckles hold her fast; four pink nails
grip to empty, chipped jelly glass. Through all night
till the bell tolls Sunday reason told go free,
feel breasts young, buttocks hard in new straw and him
come, back by Fleishhacker Zoo under date palms.
Got none but herself, stare from shoe on dustrolls
down to blue chiffon, child who brings the Bible
for school sole stir, lovely above harbor fog.

OATH

Drive that bastard semi, good buddy, Frisco
to Phoenix run once more though corpse lay buried
under family's bouquets, outfit's floral
wreath, and dirt six feet, meet in time for double
shot before we hit the rack. God damn me lone.
Who give road, rush load, blowout, and driver dead?
What rotgut sousing'll stop this bitter mouth?
McCarthy's place, empty fucking stool, ashtray,
glass, cold drafts. Rawkus bitch, laugh; wino, slobber.
Build you one sure everlasting monuement
inside my head, ole boy, where none can bother,
me and you will smoke cigars and talk times past;
till they yard us off this body's yours to live.
Sober up, quit the skid, find a redwood shack
near Klamath, no more waiting. Bud, drive that rig.

—STEVE BRONSON

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A Note on

Jorge Luis Borges

Jorge Luis Borges is a great writer who has composed only little essays or short narratives. Yet they suffice for us to call him great because of their wonderful intelligence, their wealth of invention, and their tight, almost mathematical style. Argentine by birth and temperament, but nurtured on universal literature, Borges has no spiritual homeland. He creates, outside time and space, imaginary and symbolic worlds. It is a sign of his importance that, in placing him, only strange and perfect works can be called to mind. He is akin to Kafka, Poe, sometimes to Henry James and Wells, always to Valéry by the abrupt projection of his paradoxes in what has been called "his private metaphysics."

His sources are innumerable and unexpected. Borges has read every thing, and especially what nobody reads any more: the Cabalists, the Alexandrine Greeks, medieval philosophers. His erudition is not profound—he asks of it only flashes of lightning and ideas—but it is vast. For example, Pascal wrote: "Nature is an infinite sphere whose center is everywhere, whose circumference is nowhere." Borges sets out to hunt down this metaphor through the centuries. He finds in Giordano Bruno (1584): "We can assert with certainty that the universe is all center, or that the center of the universe is everywhere and its circumference nowhere." But Giordano Bruno had been able to read in a twelfth-century French theologian, Alain de Lille, a formulation borrowed from the *Corpus Hermeticum* (third century): "God is an intelligible sphere whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere." Such researches, carried out among the Chinese as among the Arabs or the Egyptians, delight Borges, and lead him to the subjects of his stories.

Many of his masters are English. He has an infinite admiration for Wells and is indignant that Oscar Wilde could define him as "a scientific Jules Verne." Borges makes the observation that the fiction of Jules Verne speculates on future *probability* (the submarine, the trip to the moon), that of Wells on pure *possibility* (an invisible man, a flower

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that devours a man, a machine to explore time), or even on *impossibility* (a man returning from the hereafter with a future flower). Beyond that, a Wells novel symbolically represents features inherent in all human destinies. Any great and lasting book must be ambiguous, Borges says; it is a mirror that makes the reader's features known, but the author must seem to be unaware of the significance of his work—which is an excellent description of Borges's own art. "God must not engage in theology; the writer must not destroy by human reasonings the faith that art requires of us."

He admires Poe and Chesterton as much as he does Wells. Poe wrote perfect tales of fantastic horpor and invented the detective story, but he never combined the two types of writing. Chesterton *did* attempt and felicitously brought off this tour de force. Each of Father Brown's adventures proposes to explain, in reason's name, an unexplainable fact. "Though Chesterton disclaimed being a Poe or Kafka, there was, in the material out of which his ego was molded, something that tended to nightmare." Kafka *was* a direct precursor of Borges. *The Castle* might be by Borges, but he would have made it into a ten-page-story, both out of lofty laziness and out of concern for perfection. As for Kafka's precursors, Borges's erudition takes pleasure in finding them in Zeno of Elea, Kierkegaard and Robert Browning. In each of these authors there is some Kafka, but if Kafka had not written, nobody would have been able to notice it—whence this very Borgesian paradox: "Every writer creates his own precursors."

Another man who inspires him is the English writer John William Dunne, author of such curious books about time, in which he claims that the past, present and future exist simultaneously, as is proved by our dreams. (Schopenhauer, Borges remarks, had already written that life and dreams are leaves of the same book: reading them in order is living; skimming through them is dreaming.) In death we shall rediscover all the instants of our life and we shall freely combine them as in dreams. "God, our friends, and Shakespeare will collaborate with us." Nothing pleases Borges better than to play in this way with mind, dreams, space and time. The more complicated the game becomes, the happier he is. The dreamer can be dreamed in his turn. "The Mind was dreaming; the world was its dream." In all philosophers, from Democritus to Spinoza, from Schopenhauer to Kierkegaard, he is on the watch for paradoxical intellectual possibilities.

— ANDRÉ MAUROIS

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FUNES THE MEMORIOUS

by Jorge Luis Borges

I remember him (I have no right to utter this sacred verb, only one man on earth had that right and he is dead) with a dark passion flower in his hand, seeing it as no one has ever seen it, though he might look at it from the twilight of dawn till that of evening, a whole lifetime. I remember him, with his face taciturn and Indian-like and singularly *remote*, behind the cigarette. I remember (I think) his angular, leather-braiding hands. I remember near those hands a maté gourd bearing the Uruguayan coat of arms; I remember a yellow screen with a vague lake landscape in the window of his house. I clearly remember his voice: the slow, resentful, nasal voice of the old-time dweller of the suburbs, without the Italian sibilants we have today. I never saw him more than three times; the last was in 1887 . . . I find it very satisfactory that all those who knew him should write about him; my testimony will perhaps be the shortest and no doubt the poorest, but not the most impartial in the volume you will edit. My deplorable status as an Argentine will prevent me from indulging in a dithyramb, an obligatory genre in Uruguay whenever the subject is an Uruguayan. *Highbrow, city slicker, dude:* Funes never spoke these injurious words, but I am sufficieny certain I represented for him those misfortunes. Pedro Leandro Ipuche has written that Funes was a precursor of the supermen, "a vernacular and rustic Zarathustra"; I shall not debate the point, but one should not forget that he was also a kid from Fray Bentos, with certain incurable limitations.

My first memory of Funes is very perspicuous. I can see him on an afternoon in March or February of the year 1884. My father, that year, had taken me to spend the summer in

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Fray Bentos. I was returning from the San Francisco ranch with my cousin Bernardo Haedo. We were singing as we rode along and being on horseback was not the only circumstance determining my happiness. After a sultry day, an enormous slate-colored storm had hidden the sky. It was urged on by southern wind, the trees were already going wild; I was afraid (I was hopeful) that the elemental rain would take us by surprise in the open. We were running a kind of race with the storm. We entered an alleyway that sank down between two very high brick sidewalks. It had suddenly got dark; I heard some rapid and almost secret footsteps up above; I raised my eyes and saw a boy running along the narrow and broken path as if it were a narrow and broken wall. I remember his baggy gaucho trousers, his rope-soled shoes. I remember the cigarette in his hard face, against the now limitless storm cloud. Bernardo cried to him unexpectedly: "What time is it, Ireneo?" Without consulting the sky, without stopping, he replied: "It's four minutes to eight, young Bernardo Juan Francisco." His voice was shrill, mocking.

I am so unperceptive that the dialogue I have just related would not have attracted my attention had it not been stressed by my cousin, who (I believe) was prompted by a certain local pride and the desire to show that he was indifferent to the others's tripartite reply.

He told me the fellow in the alleyway was one Ireneo Funes, known for certain peculiarities such as avoiding contact with people and always knowing what time it was, like a clock. He added that he was the son of the ironing woman in town, María Clementina Funes, and that some people said his father was a doctor at the meat packers, an Englishman by the name of O'Connor, and others that he was a horse tamer or scout from the Salto district. He lived with his mother, around the corner from the Laureles house.

During the years eighty-five and eighty-six we spent the summer in Montevideo. In eighty-seven I returned to Fray Bentos. I asked, as was natural, about all my acquaintances and, finally, about the "chronometrical" Funes. I was told he had been thrown by a half-tamed horse on the San Francisco

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ranch and was left hopelessly paralyzed. I remember the sensation of uneasy magic the news produced in me: the only time I had seen him, we were returning from San Francisco on horseback and he was running along a high place; this fact, told me by my cousin Bernardo, had much of the quality of a dream made up of previous elements. I was told he never moved from his cot, with his eyes fixed on the fig tree in the back or on a spider web. In the afternoons, he would let himself be brought out to the window. He carried his pride to the point of acting as if the blow that had felled him were beneficial . . . Twice I saw him behind the iron grating of the the window, which harshly emphasized his condition as a perpetual prisoner: once, motionless, with his eyes closed; another time, again motionless, absorbed in the contemplation of a fragrant sprig of santonica.

Not without a certain vaingloriousness, I had begun at that time my methodical study of Latin. My valise contained the *De viris illustribus* of Lhomond, Quicherat's *Thesaurus*, the commentaries of Julius Caesar and an odd volume of Pliny's *Naturalis historia*, which then exceeded (and still exceeds) my moderate virtues as a Latinist. Everything becomes public in a small town; Ireneo, in his house on the outskirts, did not take long to learn of the arrival of these anomalous books. He sent me a flowery and ceremonious letter in which he recalled our encounter, unfortunately brief, "on the seventh day of February of the year 1884," praised the glorious services my uncle Gregorio Haedo, deceased that same year, "had rendered to our two nations in the valiant battle of Ituzaingó" and requested the loan of any one of my volumes, accompanied by a dictionary "for the proper intelligence of the original text, for I am as yet ignorant of Latin." He promised to return them to me in good condition, almost immediately. His handwriting was perfect, very sharply outlined; his orthography, of the type favored by Andrés Bello: *i* for *y*, *j* for *g*. At first I naturally feared a joke. My cousins assured me that was not the case, that these were peculiarities of Ireneo. I did not know whether to attribute to insolence, ignorance or stupidity the idea that the arduous Latin tongue should re-

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quire no other instrument than a dictionary; to disillusion him fully, I sent him the *Gradus ad Parnassum* of Quicherat and the work by Pliny.

On the fourteenth of February, I received a telegram from Buenos Aires saying I should return immediately, because my father was "not at all well." May God forgive me; the prestige of being the recipient of an urgent telegram, the desire to communicate to all Fray Bentos the contradiction between the negative form of the message and the peremptory adverb, the temptation to dramatize my suffering, affecting a virile stoicism, perhaps distracted me from all possibility of real sorrow. When I packed my valise, I noticed the *Gradus* and the first volume of the *Naturalis historia* were missing. The *Saturn* was sailing the next day, in the morning; that night, after supper, I headed towards Funes' house. I was astonished to find the evening no less oppressive than the day had been.

At the respectable little house, Funes' mother opened the door for me.

She told me Ireneo was in the back room and I should not be surprised to find him in the dark, because he knew how to pass the idle hours without lighting the candle. I crossed the tile patio, the little passageway; I reached the second patio. There was a grape arbor; the darkness seemed complete to me. I suddenly heard Ireneo's high-pitched, mocking voice. His voice was speaking in Latin; his voice (which came from the darkness) was articulating with morose delight a speech or prayer or incantation. The Roman syllables resounded in the earthen patio; my fear took them to be indecipherable, interminable; afterwards, in the enormous dialogue of that night, I learned they formed the first paragraph of the twenty-fourth chapter of the seventh book of the *Naturalis historia*. The subject of that chapter is memory; the last words were *ut nihil non iisdem verbis redderetur auditum.*

Without the slightest change of voice, Ireneo told me to come in. He was on his cot, smoking. It seems to me I did not see his face until dawn; I believe I recall the intermittent glow of his cigarette. The room smelled vaguely of dampness. I sat

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down; I repeated the story about the telegram and my father's illness.

I now arrive at the most difficult point in my story. This story (it is well the reader know it by now) has no other plot than that dialogue which took place half a century ago. I shall not try to reproduce the words, which are now irrecoverable. I prefer to summarize with veracity the many things Ireneo told me. The indirect style is remote and weak; I know I am sacrificing the efficacy of my narrative; my readers should imagine for themselves the hesitant periods which overwhelmed me that night.

Ireneo began by enumerating, in Latin and in Spanish, the cases of prodigious memory recorded in the *Naturalis historia:* Cyrus, king of the Persians, who could call every soldier in his armies by name; Mithridates Eupator, who administered the law in the twenty-two languages of his empire; Simonides, inventor of the science of mnemonics; Metrodorus, who practiced the art of faithfully repeating what he had heard only once. In obvious good faith, Ireneo was amazed that such cases be considered amazing. He told me that before that rainy afternoon when the blue-gray horse threw him, he had been what all humans are: blind, deaf, addlebrained, absentminded. (I tried to remind him of his exact perception of time, his memory for proper names; he paid no attention to me.) For nineteen years he had lived as one in a dream: he looked without seeing, listened without hearing, forgetting everything, almost everything, When he fell, he became unconscious; when he came out, the present was almost intolerable in its richness and sharpness, as were his most distant and trivial memories. Somewhat later he learned that he was paralyzed. The fact scarcely interested him. He reasoned (he felt) that his immobility was a minimum price to pay. Now his perception and his memory were infallible.

We, at one glance, can perceive three glasses on a table; Funes, all the leaves and tendrils and fruit that make up a grape vine. He knew by heart the forms of the southern clouds at dawn on the 30th of April, 1882, and could compare them in his memory with the mottled streaks on a book in

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Spanish binding he had only seen once and with the outlines of the foam raised by an oar in the Río Negro the night before the Quebracho uprising. These memories were not simple ones; each visual image was linked to muscular sensations, thermal sensations, etc. He could reconstruct all his dreams, all his half-dreams. Two or three times he had reconstructed a whole day; he never hesitated, but each reconstruction had required a whole day. He told me: "I alone have more memories than all mankind has probably had since the world has been the world." And again: "My dreams are like you people's waking hours." And again, toward dawn: "My memory, sir, is like a garbage heap." A circle drawn on a blackboard, a right triangle, a lozenge—all these are forms we can fully and intuitively grasp; Ireneo could do the same with the stormy mane of a pony, with a herd of cattle on a hill, with the changing fire and its innumerable ashes, with the many faces of a dead man throughout a long wake. I don't know how many stars he could see in the sky.

These things he told me; neither then nor later have I ever placed them in doubt. In those days there were no cinemas or phonographs; nevertheless, it is odd and even incredible that no one ever performed an experiment with Funes. The truth is that we live out our lives putting off all that can be put off; perhaps we all know deep down that we are immortal and that sooner or later all men will do and know all things.

Out of the darkness, Funes' voice went on talking to me.

He told me that in 1886 he had invented an original system of numbering and that in a very few days he had gone beyond the twenty-four-thousand mark. He had not written it down, since anything he thought of once would never be lost to him. His first stimulus was, I think, his discomfort at the fact that the famous thirty-three gauchos of Uruguayan history should require two signs and two words, in place of a single word and a single sign. He then applied this absurd principle to the other numbers. In place of seven thousand thirteen, he would say (for example) *Máximo Pérez;* in place of seven thousand fourteen, *The Railroad;* other numbers were *Luis Melián Lafinur, Olimar, Sulphur, the reins, the whale, the gas, the caldron,*

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Napoleon, Augustín de Vedia. In place of five hundred, he would say *nine*. Each word had a particular sign, a kind of mark; the last in the series were very complicated ... I tried to explain to him that this rhapsody of incoherent terms was precisely the opposite of a system of numbers. I told him that saying 365 meant saying three hundreds, six tens, five ones, an analysis which is not found in the "numbers" *The Negro Timoteo* or *meat blanket*. Funes did not understand me or refused to understand me.

Locke, in the seventeenth century, postulated (and rejected) an impossible language in which each individual thing, each stone, each bird and each branch, would have its own name; Funes once projected an analogous language, but discarded it because it seemed too general to him, too ambiguous. In fact, Funes once remembered not only every leaf of every tree of every wood, but also every one of the times he had perceived or imagined it. He decided to reduce each of his past days to some seventy thousand memories, which would then be defined by means of ciphers. He was dissuaded from this by two considerations: his awareness that the task was interminable, his awareness that it was useless. He thought that by the hour of his death he would not even have finished classifying all the memories of his childhood.

The two projects I have indicated (an infinite vocabulary for the natural series of numbers, a useless mental catalogue of all the images of his memory) are senseless, but they betray a certain stammering grandeur. They permit us to glimpse or infer the nature of Funes' vertiginous world. He was, let us not forget, almost incapable of ideas of a general, Platonic sort. Not only was it difficult for him to comprehend that the generic symbol *dog* embraces so many unlike individuals of diverse size and form; it bothered him that the dog at three fourteen (seen from the side) should have the same name as the dog at three fifteen (seen from the front). His own face in the mirror, his own hands, surprised him every time he saw them. Swift relates that the emperor of Lilliput could discern the movement of the minute hand; Funes could continuously discern the tranquil advances of corruption, of decay,

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of fatigue. He could note the progress of death, of dampness. He was the solitary and lucid spectator of a multiform, instantaneous and almost intolerably precise world. Babylon, London and New York have overwhelmed with their ferocious splendor the imaginations of men; no one, in their populous towers or their urgent avenues, has felt the heat and pressure of a reality as indefatigable as that which day and night converged upon the hapless Ireneo, in his poor South American suburb. It was very difficult for him to sleep. To sleep is to turn one's mind from the world; Funes, lying on his back on his cot in the shadows, could imagine every crevice and every molding in the sharply defined houses surrounding him. (I repeat that the least important of his memories was more minute and more vivid than our perception of physical pleasure or physical torment.) Towards the east, along a stretch not yet divided into blocks, there were new houses, unknown to Funes. He imagined them to be black, compact, made of homogeneous darkness; in that direction he would turn his face in order to sleep. He would also imagine himself at the bottom of the river, rocked and annihilated by the current.

With no effort, he had learned English, French, Portuguese and Latin. I suspect, however, that he was not very capable of thought. To think is to forget differences, generalize, make abstractions. In the teeming world of Funes, there were only details, almost immediate in their presence.

The wary light of dawn entered the earthen patio.

Then I saw the face belonging to the voice that had spoken all night long. Ireneo was nineteen years old; he had been born in 1868; he seemed to me as monumental as bronze, more ancient than Egypt, older than the prophecies and the pyramids. I thought that each of my words (that each of my movements) would persist in his implacable memory; I was benumbed by the fear of multiplying useless gestures.

Ireneo Funes died in 1889, of congestion of the lungs.

Translated by J. E. I.

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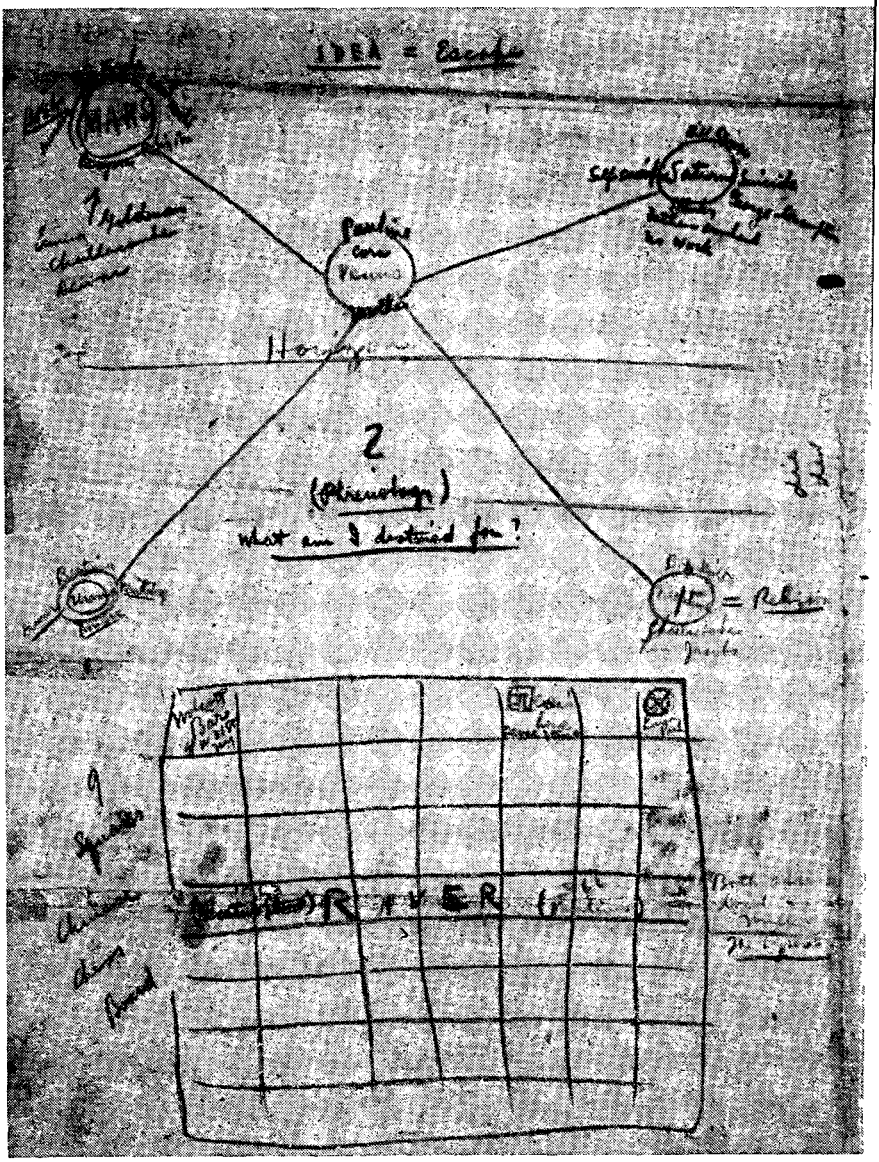
A Manuscript Page by Henry Miller "embracing planetary conjunction; topographical map of region and monuments and streets and cemeteries; fatal, or otherwise, influence of friends – according to type; Major Events; Dominant Idea; Psychological Pattern."



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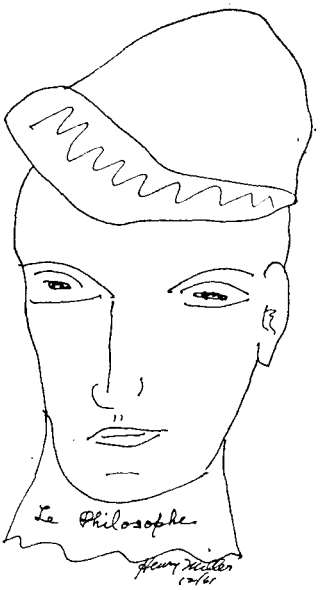

Henry Miller: Self-Portrait

THE ART OF FICTION XXVIII

HENRY MILLER

In 1934, Henry Miller then aged 42 and living in Paris, published his first book. In 1961, the book was finally published in his native land, where it promptly became a best seller and cause célèbre. By now the waters have been so muddied by controversy, censorship, pornography and obscenity that one is likely to talk about anything but the book itself.

But this is nothing new. Like D. H. Lawrence, Henry Miller has long been a byword and a legend. Championed by critics and artists, venerated by pilgrims, emulated by beatniks, he is above everything else a culture hero—or villain, to those who see him as a menace to law and order. He might even be described as a folk hero: hobo, prophet and exile, the Brooklyn boy who went to Paris when everyone else was going home, the starving bohemian enduring the plight of

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the creative artist in America, and in latter years the sage of Big Sur.

His life is all written out in a series of picaresque narratives in the first person historical present: his early Brooklyn years in *Black Spring*, his struggles to find himself during the twenties in *Tropic of Capricorn* and the three volumes of the *Rosy Crucifixion*, his adventures in Paris during the thirties in *Tropic of Cancer*.

In 1939 he went to Greece to visit Lawrence Durrell; his sojourn there provides the narrative basis of *The Colossus of Maroussi*. Cut off by the war and forced to return to America, he made the year-long odyssey recorded in the *Air-Conditioned Nightmare*. Then in 1944 he settled on a magnificent empty stretch of California coast, leading the life described in *Big Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymus Bosch*. Now that his name has made Big Sur a center for pilgrimage, he has been driven out and is once again on the move.

At 70 Henry Miller looks rather like a Buddhist monk who has swallowed a canary. He immediately impresses one as a warm and humorous human being. Despite his bald head with its halo of white hair, there is nothing old about him. His figure, surprisingly slight, is that of a young man; all his gestures and movements are young.

His voice is quite magically captivating, a mellow, resonant but quiet bass with great range and variety of modulation; he cannot be as unconscious as he seems of its musical spell. He speaks a modified Brooklynese frequently punctuated by such rhetorical pauses as "Don't you see?" and "You know?" and trailing off with a series of diminishing reflective noises, "Yas, yas... hmm... hmm... yas... hm... hm." To get the full flavor and honesty of the man, one must hear the recordings of that voice.

The interview was conducted last September in London where Miller was visiting Alfred Perlès, his biographer and crony from Paris days. The setting could not have been more incongruous, a kind of British air-conditioned nightmare, a big hotel crowded and noisy with American tourists and businessmen.

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INTERVIEWER

First of all would you explain how you go about the actual business of writing. Do you sharpen pencils like Hemingway, or anything like that to get the motor started?

MILLER

No, not generally, no, nothing of that sort. I generally go to work right after breakfast. I sit right down to the machine. If I find I'm not able to write, I quit. But no, there are no preparatory stages as a rule.

INTERVIEWER

Are there certain times of day, certain days when you work better than others?

MILLER

I prefer the morning now, and just for two or three hours. In the beginning I used to work after midnight until dawn, but that was in the very beginning. Even after I got to Paris I found it was much better working in the morning. But then I used to work long hours. I'd work in the morning, take a nap after lunch, get up and write again, sometimes write until midnight. In the last ten or fifteen years, I've found that it isn't necessary to work that much. It's bad, in fact. You drain the reservoir.

INTERVIEWER

Would you say you write rapidly? Perlès said in *My Friend Henry Miller* that you were one of the fastest typists he knew.

MILLER

Yes, many people say that. I must make a great clatter when I write. I suppose I do write rapidly. But then that varies. I can write rapidly for a while, then there come stages where I'm stuck, and I might spend an hour on a page. But that's rather rare, because when I find I'm being bogged down, I will skip a difficult part and go on, you see, and come back to it fresh another day.

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INTERVIEWER

How long would you say it took you to write one of your earlier books once you got going?

MILLER

I couldn't answer that. I could never predict how long a book would take: even now when I set out to do something I couldn't say. And it's somewhat false to take the dates the author says he began and ended a book. It doesn't mean that he was writing the book constantly during that time. Take *Sexus*, or take the whole *Rosy Crucifixion*. I think I began that in 1940, and here I'm still on it. Well, it would be absurd to say that I've been working on it all this time. I haven't even thought about it for years at a time. So how can you talk about it?

INTERVIEWER

Well, I know that you rewrote *Tropic of Cancer* several times, and that work probably gave you more trouble than any other, but of course it was the beginning. Then too, I'm wondering if writing doesn't come easier for you now?

MILLER

I think these questions are meaningless. What does it matter how long it takes to write a book? If you were to ask that of Simenon, he'd tell you very definitely. I think it takes him from four to seven weeks. He knows that he can count on it. His books have a certain length usually. Then too he's one of those rare exceptions, a man who when he says, "Now I'm going to start and write this book," gives himself to it completely. He barricades himself, he has nothing else to think about or do. Well, my life has never been that way. I've got everything else under the sun to do while writing.

INTERVIEWER

Do you edit or change much?

MILLER

That too varies a great deal. I never do any correcting or

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revising while in the process of writing. Let's say I write a thing out any old way, and then, after it's cooled off—I let it rest for a while, a month or two maybe—I see it with a fresh eye. Then I have a wonderful time of it. I just go to work on it with the ax. But not always. Sometimes it comes out almost like I wanted it.

INTERVIEWER

How do you go about revising?

MILLER

When I'm revising, I use a pen and ink to make changes, cross out, insert. The manuscript looks wonderful afterwards, like a Balzac. Then I retype, and in the process of retyping I make more changes. I prefer to retype everything myself, because even when I think I've made all the changes I want, the mere mechanical business of touching the keys sharpens my thoughts, and I find myself revising while doing the finished thing.

INTERVIEWER

You mean there is something going on between you and the machine?

MILLER

Yes, in a way the machine acts as a stimulus; it's a cooperative thing.

INTERVIEWER

In *The Books in My life*, you say that most writers and painters work in an uncomfortable position. Do you think this helps?

MILLER

I do. Somehow, I've come to believe that the last thing a writer or any artist thinks about is to make himself comfortable while he's working. Perhaps the *dis*comfort is a bit of an aid or stimulus. Men who can afford to work under better conditions often choose to work under miserable conditions.

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INTERVIEWER

Aren't these discomforts sometimes psychological? You take the case of Dostoevsky . . . .

MILLER

Well, I don't know. I know Dostoevsky was always in a miserable state, but you can't say he deliberately chose psychological discomforts. No, I doubt that strongly. I don't think anyone chooses these things, unless unconsciously. I do think many writers have what you might call a demonic nature. They are always in trouble, you know, and not only while they're writing or because they're writing, but in every aspect of their lives, with marriage, love, business, money, everything. It's all tied together, all part and parcel of the same thing. It's an aspect of the creative personality. Not all creative personalities are this way, but some are.

INTERVIEWER

You speak in one of your books of "the dictation," of being almost possessed, of having this stuff spilling out of you. How does this process work?

MILLER

Well, it happens only at rare intervals, this dictation. Someone takes over and you just copy out what is being said. It occurred most strongly with the work on D. H. Lawrence, a work I never finished—and that was because I had to do too much thinking. You see, I think it's bad to think. A writer shouldn't think much. But this was a work which required thought. I'm not very good at thinking. I work from some deep down place; and when I write, well, I don't know just exactly what's going to happen. I know what I want to write about, but I'm not concerned too much with how to say it. But in that book I was grappling with ideas; it had to have some form and meaning, and what not. I'd been on it, I suppose, a good two years. I was saturated with it, and I got obsessed and couldn't drop it. I couldn't even sleep. Well, as I say, the dictation took over most strongly with that book. It

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occurred with *Capricorn* too, and with parts of other books. I think the passages stand out. I don't know whether others notice or not.

INTERVIEWER

Are these the passages you call cadenzas?

MILLER

Yes, I have used that expression. The passages I refer to are tumultuous, the words fall over one another. I could go on indefinitely. Of course I think that is the way one should write all the time. You see here the whole difference, the great difference, between Western and Eastern thinking and behavior and discipline. If, say, a Zen artist is going to do something, he's had a long preparation of discipline and meditation, deep quiet thought about it, and then no thought, silence, emptiness, and so on—it might be for months, it might be for years. Then, when he begins, it's like lightning, just what he wants—it's perfect. Well, this is the way I think all art should be done. But who does it? We lead lives that are contrary to our profession.

INTERVIEWER

Is there a particular conditioning that the writer can go through, like the Zen swordsman?

MILLER

Why of course, but who does it? Whether he means to do it or not, however, every artist does discipline himself and condition himself in one way or another. Each man has his own way. After all, most writing is done away from the typewriter, away from the desk. I'd say it occurs in the quiet, silent moments, while you're walking or shaving or playing a game or whatever, or even talking to someone you're not vitally interested in. You're working, your mind is working, on this problem in the back of your head. So, when you get to the machine it's a mere matter of transfer.

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INTERVIEWER

You said earlier there's something inside you that takes over.

MILLER

Yes, of course. Listen. Who writes the great books? It isn't we who sign our names. What is an artist? He's a man who has antennae, who knows how to hook up to the currents which are in the atmosphere, in the cosmos; he merely has the facility for hooking on, as it were. Who is original? Everything that we are doing, everything that we think, exists already, and we are only intermediaries, that's all, who make use of what is in the air. Why do ideas, why do great scientific discoveries often occur in different parts of the world at the same time? The same is true of the elements that go to make up a poem or a great novel or any work of art. They are already in the air, they have not been given voice, that's all. They need *the* man, *the* interpreter, to bring them forth. Well, and it's true too, of course, that some men are ahead of their time. But today, I don't think it's the artist who is so much ahead of his time as the man of science. The artist is lagging behind, his imagination is not keeping pace with the men of science.

INTERVIEWER

How do you account for the fact that certain men are creative? Angus Wilson says that the artist writes because of a kind of trauma, that he uses his art as a kind of therapy to overcome his neurosis. Aldous Huxley, on the other hand, takes quite the opposite view, and says that the writer is preeminently sane, that if he has a neurosis this only adds to his handicap as a writer. Do you have any views on this subject?

MILLER

I think this varies with the individual writer. I don't think you can make such statements about writers as a whole. A writer after all is a *man*, a man like other men; he may be neurotic or he may not. I mean his neurosis, or whatever it is that they say makes his personality, doesn't account for his

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writing. I think it's a much more mysterious thing than that and I wouldn't even try to put my finger on it. I said that a writer was a man who had antennae; if he really knew what he was, he would be very humble. He would recognize himself as a man who was possessed of a certain faculty which he was destined to use for the service of others. He has nothing to be proud of, his name means nothing, his ego is nil, he's only an instrument in a long procession.

INTERVIEWER

When did you find that you had this faculty? When did you first start writing?

MILLER

I must have begun while I was working for the Western Union. That's certainly when I wrote the first book, at any rate. I wrote other little things at that time too, but the real thing happened after I quit the Western Union—in 1924—when I decided I would be a writer and give myself to it completely.

INTERVIEWER

So that means that you went on writing for a period of ten years before *Tropic of Cancer* appeared in print.

MILLER

Just about, yes. Among other things I wrote two or three novels during that time. Certainly I wrote two before I wrote the *Tropic of Cancer.*

INTERVIEWER

Could you tell me a little about that period?

MILLER

Well, I've told a good deal about it in *The Rosy Crucifixion; Sexus, Plexus* and *Nexus* all deal with that period. There will be still more in the last half of *Nexus.* I've told all about my tribulations during this period—my physical life, my dif-

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ficulties. I worked like a dog and at the same time—what shall I say?—I was in a fog. I didn't know what I was doing. I couldn't see what I was getting at. I was supposed to be working on a novel, writing this great novel, but actually I wasn't getting anywhere. Sometimes I'd not write more than three or four lines a day. My wife would come home late at night and ask, "Well, how is it going?" (I never let her see what was in the machine.) I'd say, "Oh, it's going along marvelously." "Well, where are you right now?" Now, mind you, maybe of all the pages I was supposed to have written maybe I had written only three or four, but I would talk as though I'd written a hundred or a hundred and fifty pages. I would go on talking about what I had done, composing the novel as I talked to her. And she would listen and encourage me, knowing damned well that I was lying. Next day she'd come back and say, "What about that part you spoke of the other day, how is that going?" And it was all a lie, you see, a fabrication between the two of us. Wonderful, wonderful....

INTERVIEWER

When did you begin to conceive of all of these autobiographical volumes as a whole?

MILLER

In the year 1927 when my wife went to Europe and I was left alone; I had a job for a while in the Park Department in Queens. One day, at the end of the day, instead of going home I was seized with this idea of planning the book of my life, and I stayed up all night doing it. I planned everything that I've written to date in about forty or fifty typewritten pages. I wrote it in notes, in telegraphic style. But the whole thing is there. My whole work from *Capricorn* on through *The Rosy Crucifixion*—except *Cancer*, which was a thing of the immediate present—is about the seven years that I had lived with this woman, from the time I met her until I left for Europe. I didn't know then when I was leaving, but I knew I was going sooner or later. That was the crucial period of my life as a writer, the period just before leaving America.

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INTERVIEWER

Durrell speaks of the writer's need to make the breakthrough in his writing, to hear the sound of his own voice. Isn't that your own expression as a matter of fact?

MILLER

Yes, I think so. Anyway, it happened for me with *Tropic of Cancer*. Up until that point you might say I was a wholly derivative writer, influenced by everyone, taking on all the tones and shades of every other writer that I had ever loved. I was a *literary* man, you might say. And I became a *non*-literary man: I cut the cord. I said I will do only what I can do, express what I am—that's why I used the first person, why I wrote about myself. I decided to write from the standpoint of my own experience, what I knew and felt. And that was my salvation.

INTERVIEWER

What were those earlier novels like?

MILLER

I imagine you would find, naturally you *must* find, some traces of my self in them. But I felt very keenly then that one should have some sort of story, a plot to unroll; I was more concerned then with the form and the manner of doing it than with the vital thing.

INTERVIEWER

That is what you mean by the "literary" approach?

MILLER

Yes, something that's outworn and useless, that you have to slough off. The literary had to be killed off. Naturally you don't kill that man, he's a very vital element of your self as a writer, and certainly every artist is fascinated with technique. But the other thing in writing is *you*. The point I discovered is that the best technique is none at all. I never feel that I must adhere to any particular manner of approach. I try to remain

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open and flexible, ready to turn with the wind or with the current of thought. That's my stance, my technique, if you will, to be flexible and alert, to use whatever I think good at the moment.

INTERVIEWER

In "An Open Letter to Surrealists Everywhere" you say, "I was writing surrealistically in America before I ever heard the word." Now what do you mean by surrealism?

MILLER

When I was living in Paris, we had an expression, a very American one, which in a way explains it better than anything else. We used to say, "Let 's take the lead." That meant going off the deep end, diving into the unconscious, just obeying your instincts, following your impulses, of the heart, or the guts, or whatever you want to call it. But that's my way of putting it, that isn't really surrealist doctrine; that wouldn't hold water, I'm afraid, with an André Breton. However, the French standpoint, the doctrinaire standpoint, didn't mean too much to me. All I cared about was that I found in it another means of expression, an added one, a heightened one, but one to be used very judiciously. When the well-known surrealists employed this technique, they did it too deliberately, it seemed to me. It became unintelligible, it served no purpose. Once one loses all intelligibility, one is lost, I think.

INTERVIEWER

Is surrealism what you mean by the phrase, "into the night life"?

MILLER

Yes, there it was primarily the dream. The surrealists make use of the dream, and of course that's always a marvelous fecund aspect of experience. Consciously or unconsciously, all writers employ the dream, even when they're not surrealists. The waking mind, you see, is the least serviceable in

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the arts. In the process of writing one is struggling to bring out what is unknown to himself. To put down merely what one is conscious of means nothing really, gets one nowhere. Anybody can do that with a little practice, anybody can become that kind of writer.

INTERVIEWER

You have called Lewis Carroll a surrealist, and his name suggests the kind of jabberwocky which you use occasionally...

MILLER

Yes, yes, of course Lewis Carroll is a writer I love. I would give my right arm to have written his books, or to be able to come anywhere near doing what he did. When I finish my project, if I continue writing, I would love to write sheer nonsense.

INTERVIEWER

What about dadaism? Did you ever get into that?

MILLER

Yes, dadaism was even more important to me than surrealism. The dadaist movement was something truly revolutionary. It was a deliberate conscious effort to turn the tables upside down, to show the absolute insanity of our present-day life, the worthlessness of all our values. There were wonderful men in the dadaist movement, and they all had a sense of humor. It was something to make you laugh, but also to make you think.

INTERVIEWER

It seems to me that in *Black Spring* you came pretty close to dadaism.

MILLER

No doubt. I was most impressionable then. I was open to everything that was going on when I reached Europe. Some things I already knew about in America, it's true. *Transition*

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came to us in America; Jolas was marvelous in selecting those strange bizarre writers and artists we had never heard of. Then I remember, for example, going to the Armory Show to see Marcel Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase," and many other marvelous things. I was infatuated, intoxicated. All this was what I was looking for, it seemed so familiar to me.

INTERVIEWER

You've always been better understood and appreciated in Europe than in America or England. How do you account for this?

MILLER

Well, in the first place I didn't have much chance to be understood in America because my books weren't in print there. But aside from that, though I am 100 per cent American (and I know it more and more every day), still I had better contact with Europeans. I was able to talk to them, express my thoughts more easily, be more quickly understood. I had a greater rapport with them than with Americans.

INTERVIEWER

In your book on Patchen you say that in America the artist will never be accepted unless he compromises himself. Do you still feel that way?

MILLER

Yes, more strongly than ever. I feel that America is essentially against the artist, that the enemy of America is the artist, because he stands for individuality and creativeness, and that's *un*American somehow. I think that of all countries—we have to overlook the communist countries of course—America is the most mechanized, robotized, of all.

INTERVIEWER

What did you find in Paris in the thirties that you couldn't find in America?

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MILLER

For one thing, I suppose I found a freedom such as I never knew in America. I found contact with people so much easier—that is, the people that I enjoyed talking to. I met more of my own kind there. Above all I felt that I was tolerated. I didn't ask to be understood or accepted. To be tolerated was enough. In America I never felt that. But then, Europe was a new world to me. I suppose it might have been good almost anywhere—just to be in some other, different world, an alien. Because all my life, really, and this is part of my psychological—what shall I say?—strangeness: I've liked only what is alien.

INTERVIEWER

In other words, if you'd gone to Greece in 1930 instead of 1940 you might have found the same thing?

MILLER

I might not have found the same thing, but I would have found the means of self-expression, of self-liberation there. I may not have become the kind of writer that I am now, but I feel I would have found myself. In America I was in danger of going mad, or committing suicide. I felt completely isolated.

INTERVIEWER

How about Big Sur? Did you find a congenial environment there?

MILLER

Oh, no, there was nothing there, except nature, I was alone, which was what I wanted. I stayed there because it was an isolated spot. I had already learned to write no matter where I lived. It was a wonderful change, Big Sur. I then definitely put the cities behind me. I'd had my fill of city life. Of course I never chose Big Sur, you understand. I was dumped on the road there one day by a friend. As he left me he said, "You go and see such and such a person, and she'll put

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you up for the night or a week. It's a wonderful country, I think you'll like it." And that's how I fell into it. I never had heard of Big Sur before. I knew of Point Sur because I'd read Robinson Jeffers. I read his *Women at Point Sur in* the Café Rotonde in Paris—I'll never forget it.

INTERVIEWER

Isn't it surprising that you should have gone out to nature that way, since you'd always been a city man?

MILLER

Well, you see, I have a Chinese nature. You know, in ancient China, when the artist or the philosopher began to get old, he retired to the country. To live and meditate in peace.

INTERVIEWER

But in your case it was something of a coincidence?

MILLER

Entirely. But, you see, everything of significance in my life has happened that way—by pure hazard. Of course I don't believe that either. I believe there always was a purpose, that it was destined to be that way. The explanation lies in my horoscope—that would be my frank answer. To me it's all quite clear.

INTERVIEWER

Why did you never go back to Paris to live?

MILLER

For several reasons. In the first place, I got married soon after I reached Big Sur, and then I had children, and then I had no money, and then too I fell in love with Big Sur. I had no desire to resume my Paris life, it was finished. Most of my friends were gone, the war had broken up everything.

INTERVIEWER

Gertrude Stein says that living in France purified her Eng-

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lish because she didn't use the language in daily life, and this made her the stylist that she is. Did living in Paris have the same effect on you?

MILLER

Not exactly, but I understand what she meant. Of course I spoke much more English while there than Gertrude Stein did. Less French, in other words. Still, I was saturated with French all the time. Hearing another language daily sharpens your own language for you, makes you aware of shades and nuances you never suspected. Also, there comes a slight forgetting which makes you hunger to be able to recapture certain phrases and expressions. You become more conscious of your own language.

INTERVIEWER

Did you ever have anything to do with Gertrude Stein or her set?

MILLER

No, nothing whatever. Never met her, no, knew nobody belonging to her set. But then I didn't know much of any set, you might say. I was always a lone wolf, always against groups and sets and sects and cults and isms and so on. I knew a number of surrealists, but I never was a member of the surrealist group or any group.

INTERVIEWER

Didn't you know any American writers in Paris?

MILLER

I knew Walter Lowenfels, Samuel Putnam, Michael Fraenkel. Sherwood Anderson, Dos Passos, Steinbeck, and Saroyan I met later, in America. I met them only a few times, no more. I never had any real connection with them. Of all the American writers that I have met Sherwood Anderson stands out as the one I liked most. Dos Passos was a warm, wonderful chap, but Sherwood Anderson, well I had been in love with

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his work, his style, his language, from the beginning. And I liked him as a man—although we were completely at loggerheads about most things, especially America. He loved America, he knew it intimately, he loved the people and everything about America. I was the contrary. But I loved to hear what he had to say about America.

INTERVIEWER

Have you known many English writers? You've had a long-standing friendship, haven't you, with Durrell and Powys?

MILLER

Durrell, sure, but then I hardly think of him as an English writer. I think of him as *un*British, completely. John Cowper Powys, of course, had the most tremendous influence on me; but then, I never knew him, never cultivated him. I didn't dare! I was a midget and he was a giant, you see. He was my god, my mentor, my idol. I had run across him when I was in my early twenties. He used to lecture then in Labor temples in New York, Cooper Union and such places. It cost only ten cents to hear him speak. Some thirty years later I went to see him in Wales, and found to my surprise that he knew my work. He seemed to have great respect for my work—which surprised me even more.

INTERVIEWER

You knew Orwell in those days too?

MILLER

Orwell I met maybe two or three times, on his visits to Paris. I wouldn't call him a friend, just a passing acquaintance. But I was crazy about his book *Down and Out in Paris and London;* I think it's a classic. For me it's still his best book. Though he was a wonderful chap in his way, Orwell, in the end I thought him stupid. He was like so many English people, an idealist, and, it seemed to me, a foolish idealist. A man of principle, as we say. Men of principle bore me.

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INTERVIEWER

You don't have much use for politics?

MILLER

None whatever. I regard politics as a thoroughly foul, rotten world. We get nowhere through politics. It debases everything.

INTERVIEWER

Even political idealism of Orwell's sort?

MILLER

Especially that! The idealists in politics lack a sense of reality. And a politician must be a realist above all. These people with ideals and principles, they're all at sea, in my opinion. One has to be a lowbrow, a bit of a murderer, to be a politician, ready and willing to see people sacrificed, slaughtered, for the sake of an idea, whether a good one or a bad one. I mean, those are the ones who flourish.

INTERVIEWER

What about some of the great writers of the past that have particularly attracted you? You've done studies of Balzac and Rimbaud and Lawrence. Would you say there's a particular type of writer that draws you?

MILLER

That's hard to say, the writers I love are so diverse. They are the writers who are more than writers. They have this mysterious X quality which is metaphysical, occult, or what not—I don't know what term to use—this little extra something beyond the confines of literature. You see, people read to be amused, to pass the time, or to be instructed. Now I never read to pass the time, I never read to be instructed; I read to be taken out of myself, to become ecstatic. I'm always looking for the author who can lift me out of myself.

INTERVIEWER

Can you say why you never finished your book on D. H. Lawrence?

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MILLER

Yes, it's very simple. The further I got into the book, the less I understood what I was doing. I found myself in a mass of contradictions. I found that I didn't really know who Lawrence was, I couldn't place him, I couldn't put my finger on him, I just couldn't cope with him after a while. I got completely bewildered. I'd got myself into a jungle, and I couldn't get out. So I abandoned the work.

INTERVIEWER

You didn't have this trouble with Rimbaud, though?

MILLER

No, oddly enough. He's more of an enigma as a personality, true. But then, I didn't do so much grappling with ideas in the Rimbaud book. Lawrence was entirely a man of ideas, and he hung his literature on the rack of these ideas.

INTERVIEWER

You don't necessarily subscribe to Lawrence's ideas, do you?

MILLER

No, not altogether, but I do admire his quest, his search, his struggle. And there are many things in Lawrence I agree with. On the other hand, there are many things I laugh about in Lawrence, things which seem absurd and stupid, foolish. I have a better perspective of him today, but I no longer find it important to say anything about him. Then he meant something to me, I was completely in his grip.

INTERVIEWER

Well now, I suppose we have to go into this question of pornography and obscenity. I hope you don't mind. After all, you're considered an authority on the subject. Didn't you say somewhere, "I am for obscenity and against pornography"?

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MILLER

Well, it's very simple. The obscene would be the forthright, and pornography would be the roundabout. I believe in saying the truth, coming out with it cold, shocking if necessary, not disguising it. In other words, obscenity is a cleansing process, whereas pornography only adds to the murk.

INTERVIEWER

Cleansing in what sense?

MILLER

Whenever a taboo is broken, something good happens, something vitalizing.

INTERVIEWER

All taboos are bad?

MILLER

Not among primitive peoples. There is reason for the taboo in primitive life, but not in our life, not in civilized communities. The taboo then is dangerous and unhealthy. You see, civilized peoples don't live according to moral codes or principles of any kind. We speak about them, we pay lipservice to them, but nobody believes in them. Nobody practices these rules, they have no place in our lives. Taboos after all are only hangovers, the product of diseased minds, you might say, of fearsome people who hadn't the courage to live and who under the guise of morality and religion have imposed these things upon us. I see the world, the civilized world, as largely irreligious. The religion in force among civilized people is always false and hypocritical, the very opposite of what the initiators of any religion really meant.

INTERVIEWER

Still, you yourself have been called a very religious man.

MILLER

Yes, but without espousing any religion. What does that

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mean? That means simply having a reverence for life, being on the side of life instead of death. Again, the word "civilization" to my mind is coupled with death. When I use the word, I see civilization as a crippling, thwarting thing, a stultifying thing. For me it was always so. I don't believe in the golden ages, you see. What I mean is that it was a golden age for a very few people, for a select few, but the masses were always in misery, they were superstitious, they were ignorant, they were downtrodden, they were strangled by Church and State. I'm still a great believer in Spengler, and there you have it all. He makes the antithesis between culture and civilization. Civilization is the arteriosclerosis of culture.

INTERVIEWER

Now Durrell in that article he wrote about you for *Horizon* about ten years ago speaks of obscenity as technique. Do you regard obscenity as a technique?

MILLER

I think I know what he meant. I think he meant a shock technique. Well, I may have used it thus unconsciously, but I never deliberately used it that way. I employed obscenity as naturally as I would any other way of speaking. It was like breathing, it was part of my whole rhythm. There were moments when you were obscene, and then there were other moments. I don't think obscenity is the most important element by any means. But it's a very important one, and it must not be denied, overlooked, or suppressed.

INTERVIEWER

It might also be exaggerated...

MILLER

It could be, but what harm if it were? What are we so worried about, what is there to fear? Words, words—what is there to fear in them? Or in ideas? Supposing they are revolting, are we cowards? Haven't we faced all manner of things, haven't we been on the edge of destruction time and

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again through war, disease, pestilence, famine? What are we threatened with by the exaggerated use of obscenity? Where's the danger?

INTERVIEWER

You have commented that obscenity is mild by comparison to the sort of violence that is very common in American paperbacks.

MILLER

Yes, all this perverse sadistic writing is abhorrent to me. I've always said mine is healthy because it's joyous and natural. I never express anything that people are not saying and doing all the time. Where did I get it from? I didn't pick it out of a hat. It's all around us, we breathe it every day. People simply refuse to acknowledge it. Between the printed word and the spoken word—what difference? You know, we didn't always have this taboo. There was a time in English literature when most anything was permitted. It's only in the last two or three hundred years that we've had this queasy attitude.

INTERVIEWER

Well, even in Chaucer you won't find all the words you find in Henry Miller.

MILLER

But you do find plenty of joyous, healthy naturalism, plenty of freedom of speech.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think of the comment Durrell made in the interview he did for the *Paris Review?* He said that in retrospect he found parts of the *Black Book* too obscene now.

MILLER

Did he? Well, let me say that those are the parts I relish most. I thought they were marvelous when I first read them, and I still think so today. Maybe he was only spoofing, Durrell.

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INTERVIEWER

Why have you written so much about sex? What does sex mean for you? Does it mean something special?

MILLER

That's hard to answer. You know, I think I have written as much of what my hostile critics call "flapdoodle"—that is, metaphysical nonsense—as I have about sex. Only they choose to look at the sex. No, I can't answer that question, except to say that it's played a great part in my life. I've led a good rich sexual life, and I don't see why it should be left out.

INTERVIEWER

Did it have anything to do with your break with the life you were leading in New York?

MILLER

No, I don't think so. But one becomes aware in France, after having lived in America, that sex pervades the air. It's there all around you, like a fluid. Now I don't doubt that Americans enter into sexual relations as strongly, deeply, and multifariously as any other people, but it's not in the atmosphere around you, somehow. Then too, in France woman plays a bigger role in man's life. She has a better standing there, she's taken into consideration, she's talked to like a person, not just as a wife or a mistress or what-not. Besides the Frenchman prefers to be in the company of women. In England and America, men seem to enjoy being among themselves.

INTERVIEWER

Still, your life in the Villa Seurat was a very masculine kind of life.

MILLER

To be sure, but there were always women about. I had many friends, it's true, but I've had great friendships all through my life. That's another thing in my horoscope: I'm

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a man who is destined to make friends. That is probably the biggest factor in my life, and perhaps I ought to say something about it. When I started writing I began to realize how much I was indebted to others. I have been helped all my life, by friends and strangers too. What did I need money for, when I had friends? What does anyone want, if he has friends? I've had many friends, great friends, lifelong friends. I'm only now losing them through death.

INTERVIEWER

Let's leave sex and talk a little about painting. Now, you sensed this urge to write about the middle of the twenties; did you start painting about the same time?

MILLER

Very shortly after. I think it was 1927 or 8 that I began. But not with the same seriousness, naturally. The desire to write was a big thing in my life, a very big thing. If I didn't begin writing till quite late—I was 33 when I definitely began—it wasn't that I had never thought about it. I had put it too far above me, I didn't think I had the ability, I didn't believe in myself as a writer, as an artist. I didn't dare to think I could be such a person, you see. Well, I didn't take to painting in that way. I discovered that there was another side of me that I could use. It gave me pleasure to paint, it was recreation, it was a rest from other things.

INTERVIEWER

Is it still a kind of game with you?

MILLER

Oh, yes, nothing more.

INTERVIEWER

Don't you find some kind of fundamental connection, though, between the arts?

MILLER

Absolutely. If you're creative in one way, you're creative

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in another. Originally, you know, music was the biggest thing with me. I played the piano, I hoped to be a good pianist, but I didn't have the talent for it. Still, I was saturated with music. I might even say that music means more to me than writing or painting. It's there in the back of my head all the time.

INTERVIEWER

You were very keen on jazz at one time.

MILLER

So I was. I'm not so keen today. I think jazz quite empty now. It's too limited. Just as I deplore what happened to the movies, so I deplore the fate of jazz. It becomes more and more automatic, it doesn't evolve enough, it's not enriching. It's like having a cocktail. I need wine and beer, champagne and brandy too.

INTERVIEWER

You wrote several essays in the thirties on the art of the film. Did you ever get a chance to practice that art?

MILLER

No, but I still hope to meet the man who will give me a chance. What I deplore most is that the medium of the film has never been properly exploited. It's a poetic medium with all sorts of possibilities. Just think of the element of dream and fantasy. But how often do we get it? Now and then a little touch of it, and we're agape. And think of all the technical devices at our command. But my God, we haven't even begun to use them. We could have incredible marvels, wonders, limitless joy and beauty. And what do we get? Sheer crap. The film is the freest of all media, you can do marvels with it. In fact I would welcome the day when the film would displace literature, when there'd be no more need to read. You remember faces in films, and gestures, as you never do when you read a book. If the film can hold you at all, you give yourself to it completely. Even when you listen to music, it's not like that. You go to the concert hall and the atmos-

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phere is bad, the people are yawning, or falling asleep, the program is too long, it hasn't got the things you like, and so on. You know what I mean. But in the cinema, sitting there in the dark, the images coming and going, it's like a rain of meteorites hitting you.

INTERVIEWER

What's this about a film version of *Tropic of Cancer?*

MILLER

Well, there are rumors of it. There have been offers made, but I can't see how anyone could possibly make a film of that book.

INTERVIEWER

Would you like to do it yourself?

MILLER

No, I wouldn't because I think it's almost impossible to make a film of that book. I don't see the story there, for one thing. And then, so much depends on the language. Maybe one could get away with this tropical language in Japanese or Turkish. I can't see it being rendered in English, can you? The film is so definitely a dramatic, plastic medium, anyhow, a thing of images.

INTERVIEWER

You were a judge at the Cannes Film Festival, weren't you, last year?

MILLER

Yes, though I was rather a dubious choice. The French probably did it to show their appreciation of my work. Of course they knew I was a cineast, but when a reporter asked me if I still liked films, I had to say I hardly ever see them any more. For fifteen years now I've seen very few good movies. But sure, I'm still a cineast at heart.

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INTERVIEWER

Well, now you've written a play. How do you feel about this medium?

MILLER

It's a medium I always wished to tackle, but I never had the courage. In *Nexus*, when I'm living that underground life and struggling to write, there's a description, a very vivid one, of how I tried to write a play about the life we were then living. I never finished it. I think I got as far as the first act. I had tacked an elaborate plan of it on the wall, and I could talk about it marvelously, but I couldn't bring it off. The play I've just written fell out of the hat, so to speak. I was in a peculiar state of mind: I had nothing to do, nowhere to go, nothing much to eat, everybody was away, and so I said why not sit down and try it? I had no idea what I was doing when I began, the words just came to me, I didn't struggle with it. There was hardly any effort involved.

INTERVIEWER

What's it all about?

MILLER

About everything and nothing. I don't think it matters much what it's about, really. It's a kind of farce or burlesque, with surrealistic elements. And there's music, incidental music, which comes from the jukebox and over the air. I don't think it has much importance. The most I can say about it is that you won't go to sleep if you see it.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think you'll go on and write more plays?

MILLER

I hope so, yes. The next one will be a tragedy, or a comedy to make one weep.

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INTERVIEWER

What else are you writing now?

MILLER

I'm not writing anything else.

INTERVIEWER

Aren't you going on with *Nexus?*

MILLER

Yes, sure, that's what I *have* to do. But I haven't begun it yet. I made several attempts but gave up.

INTERVIEWER

You *have* to do it, you say?

MILLER

Well, yes, in a sense I must finish my project, the project I laid out in 1927. This is the end of it, you see. I think part of my delay in finishing it is that I don't want to bring the work to an end. It means that I will have to turn over, take a new tack, discover a new field, as it were. Because I no longer want to write about my personal experiences. I wrote all these autobiographical books not because I think myself such an important person but—this will make you laugh—because I thought when I began that I was telling the story of the most tragic suffering any man had endured. As I got on with it I realized that I was only an amateur at suffering. Certainly I had my full share of it, but I no longer think it was so terrible. That's why I called the trilogy *The Rosy Crucifixion.* I discovered that this suffering was good for me, that it opened the way to a joyous life, through acceptance of the suffering. When a man is crucified, when he dies to himself, the heart opens up like a flower. Of course you don't die, nobody dies, death doesn't exist, you only reach a new level of vision, a new realm of consciousness, a new unknown world. Just as you don't know where you came from, so you don't know where you're going. But that there is something there, before and after, I firmly believe.

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INTERVIEWER

How does it feel to be a best seller after enduring the plight of the creative artist all these years?

MILLER

I really have no felings about it. It's unreal to me, the whole thing. I don't find myself involved. In fact I rather dislike it. It gives me no pleasure. All I see is more disruption in my life, more intrusions, more nonsense. People are concerned about something which no longer concerns me. That book doesn't mean anything to me any more. People think because they're all worked up about it that I am too. They think it's a great thing for me that I'm accepted at last. Well, I feel that I'd been accepted long before, at least by those I cared to be accepted by. To be accepted by the mob doesn't mean a thing to me. In fact it's rather painful. Because I'm being accepted for the wrong reasons. It's a sensational affair, it doesn't mean that I am appreciated for my true worth.

INTERVIEWER

But this is part of the recognition that you've always known would come to you.

MILLER

Yes, of course. But then, don't you see, the only real recognition comes from those who are on the same level with you, from your peers. That's the only kind that matters, and I've had that. I've had it for years now.

INTERVIEWER

Which of your books do you think came off best?

MILLER

I always say *The Colossus of Maroussi*.

INTERVIEWER

The critics, most of them, say *Cancer* is your great book.

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MILLER

Well, on rereading *Cancer* I found that it was a much better book than I had thought. I liked it. I was amazed, in fact, I hadn't looked at it for many years, you know. I think it's a very good book, that it has lasting qualities. But the *Colossus* was written from some other level of my being. What I like about it is that it's a joyous book, it expresses joy, it gives joy.

INTERVIEWER

What ever happened to *Draco and the Ecliptic* which you announced many years ago?

MILLER

Nothing. That's been forgotten, though it is always possible that I may one day write that book. My thought was to write a very slim work, explaining what I had been trying to do in writing all these books about my life. In other words, to forget what I had written and try once again to explain what I had hoped to do. In that way perhaps to give the significance of the work from the author's standpoint. You see, the author's standpoint is only one of many, and his idea of the significance of his own work is lost in the welter of other voices. Does he know his own work as well as he imagines? I rather think not. I rather think he's like a medium who, when he comes out of his trance, is amazed at what he's said and done.

—GEORGE WICKES

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PARIS AGAIN

As one who has been homesick for his town
And then returns, expecting some gay tune,
Your hear a beggar sing a mournful rhyme
Of youth and innocence and love's old crime,
A song you knew by heart and then half lost.
And this is all.
You ask, what is the cost?
Old music? No, the songs you once admired
Are still being sung. For you they were acquired
In the dim process of your journeying—
O years, O weariness, O cost of being.

—DONALD PETERSEN

TO PROFESSOR SO-AND-SO

After three hundred years had I not grown
Content with my oblivion and found
Solace in small needs satisfied—one song,
One line, that ran like Rhenish from the jar,
Or one wool-merchant's wife who otherwise
Had gone into her grave and never learned
The long sweet shudder of a metaphor—
When, groping among old coats in a dusty closet,
You closed your hand upon another hand?

—DONALD FINKEL

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EVERYTHING

by Ingeborg Bachmann

Whenever, like two people turned to stone, we sit down to a meal together or meet at the door at night because each of us has just remembered about locking up, I feel our sadness is an arch, a great bow extending from one end of the world to the other–which is: from Hanna to me–and in the drawn bow an arrow aimed straight at the heart of the unmoving sky. When we go back through the hall, she is two paces ahead of me, she goes into the bedroom without saying goodnight, and I take refuge in my own room, at my desk, where I sit staring at nothing, seeing always her bowed head and hearing always her silence. Has she gone to bed and is she trying to sleep, or is she still awake, waiting? What for?– since she isn't waiting for me!

When I married Hanna it was less for her sake than because she was expecting the child. I had no choice, did not need to make any decision. I was stirred because there was something on the way that was new and which emanated from us, and because the world seemed to be waxing–like the moon, which one is supposed to bow to three times when it first appears again, exquisite, wan as a puff of breath, there at the beginning of its cycle. There were moments of distraction such as I hadn't known before. Even at the office – although I had more than enough to do – or during a conference I would suddenly drift off into this state in which I was concentrated solely on the child, unknown, spectral being that it still was, sending all my thoughts towards where it lay captive in the warm lightless womb.

The child that we were expecting changed us. We scarcely went out any more, and neglected our friends; we looked for

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a larger apartment and settled down more comfortably, with a certain finality. But because of the child that I was waiting for everything began to change for me; I stumbled upon thoughts, unexpectedly, as though walking on mined ground –thoughts of such explosive power that I might well have recoiled, and yet I went on, reckless of the danger.

Hanna did not understand. Not being able to decide whether the pram should have big wheels or small ones made me appear indifferent. (I really don't know. Just as you like. Oh yes, I'm listening.) When I stood about in shops while she was choosing bonnets, little jackets, and nappies, hesitating between pink and blue, woollen mixture and pure wool, she reproached me with not taking an interest. But I was—if anything, too much.

How on earth am I to explain what was going on in me? It was like being a savage who is suddenly made to realise that the world in which he moves about between his campfire and his bed, between sunrise and sunset, between hunting and eating, is the same world that is millions of years old which will pass away, which occupies a trivial place in one among many solar systems, and which revolves at great speed on its axis and also round the sun. All at once I saw myself in other contexts, myself and the child that, at a definite point in time, at the beginning or middle of November, would have its turn, starting its own life, exactly as I once did, exactly as everyone did before me.

Just try to imagine it—all those generations! It's like the black and white sheep you count before going to sleep (one black, one white, one black, one white, and so on), a device that now makes one all dull and drowsy, now leaves one desperately wide awake. I never could go to sleep by means of this prescription, although Hanna, who got it from her mother, swears it's more soothing than any sedative. Perhaps many people find it soothing to think of this chain: And Shem begat Arphaxad. And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah. And Salah begat Eber. And Eber begat Peleg. And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu, and Reu Serug, and Serug Nahor, and each of them thereafter many

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sons and daughters besides, and the sons all begat sons in their turn, namely Nahor begat Terah, and Terah Abram, Nahor, and Haran. I tried, a few times, to run through this list in my mind, not only forwards but also backwards, right back to Adam and Eve, from whom we are doubtless not descended, or back to the hominids, from whom we may originate, but in either case there is an obscurity in which this chain is lost from sight, and so it really doesn't matter whether one clings to Adam and Eve or to some other couple. Only if one doesn't wish to cling, but prefers to ask what each of them, in his time, had his turn for, one can't make anything of the chain and has no use for all these begettings, for either the first or the last of those lives. For each gets only one turn in the game that he finds going on and is required to understand—procreation and education, economics and politics—and in which he is allowed to concern himself with money and emotions, with work and inventions and justifying the rules of the game, which are called "thought".

But since, as it turns out, we do go on increasing with such confidence, I suppose one must resign oneself to it. The game needs the players. (Or is it the players that need the game?) I was myself brought into the world with the same confidence, and now I was bringing a child into the world.

I was beginning to tremble at the very thought.

I began to look at *everything* in relation to the child. My hands, for instance, which would some day touch and hold it, our third-floor apartment, the Kandlgasse, the VII. District, the ways that one could take criss-cross through the town right down to the Prater Meadows, and finally the whole world, with all that's in it, which I would explain to the child. It was from me that it should learn the names: table and bed, nose and foot. And also such words as: spirit and God and soul, useless words in my opinion, but ones that could not be kept from it, and, later on, words as complicated as: resonance, diapositive, chiliasm, and astronautics. I would have to see to it that my child learnt what everything meant and how everything was to be used, a

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door-handle and a bicycle, a gargle and a printed form. My head whirled.

When the child came, there was naturally no chance to put the great educational scheme into operation. There he was, jaundiced, crumpled, pitiful, and the one thing I was not prepared for was that I must give him a name. Hanna and I hastily came to an agreement and had three names entered in the register: my father's, her father's, and my grandfather's. None of these three names was ever used. By the end of the first week the child was called Fipps. I don't know how it came about. Perhaps indeed it was partly my fault, for, like Hanna, who had an inexhaustible gift for inventing and juggling with nonsensical monosyllables, I tried to call him by pet names because the real names were so entirely unsuitable for the tiny naked creature. Out of the flux of geniality there arose this name that came to exasperate me more and more in the course of the years. Sometimes I even blamed the child himself for it, as though he could have protested, as though it hadn't all been mere chance. Fipps! I shall have to go on calling him that, shall have to go on making him seem ridiculous even beyond the grave, and us as well.

When Fipps was lying in his blue-and-white cot, awake or asleep, and I was of no use except to wipe away some dribbles or some regurgitated milk from round his mouth or to pick him up when he cried, in the hope of making him easier, it struck me for the first time that he might have some plan of his own affecting me, but that he was giving me plenty of time to discover what it was, indeed was determined to give me plenty of time, like a ghost appearing to one and vanishing into the darkness and appearing again, always with the same impenetrable gaze. I would often sit beside his cot, looking down into that face in which there was so little change of expression, and those unfocussed eyes, studying his features as if they were some ancient script that could not be deciphered because there was no clue how to begin. I was glad to observe that Hanna imperturbably confined her attentions to his immediate needs, feeding him,

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putting him to sleep, waking him, turning him over, changing him, and so on, according to the rules. She cleaned his nostrils with little plugs of cotton-wool and dusted between his chubby thighs with whole clouds of powder, as though conferring a permanent benefit on him and on herself.

After a few weeks she tried to inveigle him into producing his first smile. But when he did at last surprise us with it, for me it was a grimace at once enigmatic and irrelevant. And then when he began to turn his eyes to us always more often and more directly, or stretched out his little arms, I suspected that it did not mean anything, that only we were beginning to supply him with the reasons that he would later accept. Hanna was not the person—and perhaps there could not have been a person—to understand what was going on in me, but it was at this period that I began to be uneasy. I am afraid it was then that I began to drift apart from Hanna, excluding her more and more, shutting her off from my real thoughts. I discovered a weakness in myself—it was the child that brought about the discovery—and the feeling that I was approaching some defeat. I was thirty, like Hanna. She looked delicate and young as never before, but the child had not renewed my youth. In proportion as he extended his scope, I reduced mine. I was being driven to the wall—by every smile, every cry of delight, every yell. I lacked the strength to smother this smiling, this chirruping, and these cries, right from the start. For that is what I ought to have done!

The time left to me was passing quickly. Fipps sat up in his pram, got his first teeth, cried a lot; soon he was stretching, managing to get on to his feet, growing a little steadier all the time, crawling about the room, and then one day produced his first intelligible words. There was no more stopping it, and still I didn't know what to do.

Well, what? Previously I had thought I would have to teach him about the world. Since my mute dialogues with him I had begun to doubt that, and finally realised it was not so. Was it, for instance, not in my power to conceal from him what things were called and *not* to teach him the

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use of things? He was the first human being. Everything had its beginning with him, and there was no saying that everything might not also become quite different because of him. Should I not leave the world to him, immaculate and without meaning? After all, I didn't have to initiate him into functions and aims, into good and evil, into what was real and what only seemed to be so. Why should I educate him into my own likeness, causing him to know and to believe, to rejoice and to suffer! From here, from where we stand, this is the worst of all possible worlds and nobody has understood it down to this day; but from where he stood nothing was decided. Not yet. How long was there still to go?

And suddenly I realised: it's all a question of language, and not merely of this particular language of ours, which was created with all the other languages at the Tower of Babel in order to bring confusion into the world. For under them all there's another language smouldering away, a language that extends into gestures and glances, into the evolving of thoughts and the ebb and flow of emotions, and it's here that all our griefs begin. It was all a question whether I could save the child from our language until he had founded a new one and could so begin a new era.

I would often go out alone with Fipps, and whenever I recognised in him what Hanna had done to him, the caresses, little vanities, playfulness that she taught him, it horrified me. He was taking after us. But not only after Hanna and me—no, after people in general. Yet there were moments when he was a sovereign law unto himself, and then I would observe him very closely indeed. All ways were the same to him. All living creatures the same. Hanna and I were undoubtedly of more importance to him solely because we were always busying ourselves about him in some way. It was all the same to him. How long would it still be so?

He would be afraid. But not yet of an avalanche or of some infamy, but of a leaf stirring on a tree. Of a butterfly. Flies would throw him into a panic. And I would think: How will he be able to live when some day a whole tree sways in the wind, if I leave him in this ignorance!

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He encountered a neighbour's child on the step; he reached out clumsily, right into the other child's face, and stepped back, perhaps not knowing that this other was a child like himself. Previously he had yelled whenever he felt uncomfortable, but now when he yelled it meant something more. It would often happen at bedtime, or when one picked him up to bring him to the table for a meal, or if one took away a toy from him. There was a great rage in him. He would sometimes lie down on the floor, clawing at the carpet and bellowing till he was blue in the face and foaming at the mouth. He would scream in his sleep as if a vampire were at his throat. These screams confirmed my belief that he still dared to scream and his screams had the desired result.

Oh, some day!

Hanna's way was to resort to tender reproaches, telling him that he was naughty. She would hug him to her, kissing him or gazing at him gravely, teaching him not to make his mother sad. She was a wonderful temptress. She would stand ceaselessly bending over the nameless river, trying to draw him across, walking up and down on our shore of it, coaxing him with chocolate and oranges, spinning-tops and teddy-bears.

And when the trees cast shadows, I seemed to hear a voice saying: Teach him the shadow-language! The world is an experiment, and it's enough that this experiment has always been repeated in the same way and with the same result. Try another experiment! Let him go to shadows! The result hitherto has been a life of guilt, love, and desperation. (I had begun to think everything in generalisations; then such words would occur to me). But I could save him the guilt, the love, and every sort of doom, making him free for another life.

Yes, on Sundays I would take him for walks in the Vienna woods, and when we came to a pool, something within me would say: Teach him the water-language! The path would become stony. Then full of roots. Teach him the stone-language! Root him anew! The leaves were falling, for it was autumn again. Teach him the language of leaves!

But since I knew no word of such languages, nor could

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discover any, having only my own language and being unable to get beyond the limits of it, I would carry him up and down the paths in silence, and home again, where he learnt to form sentences and went into the trap. He was already expressing wishes, asking for things, giving orders, or talking for the sake of talking. On later Sunday walks he would tear off blades of grass, pick up worms, catch beetles. Now they were no longer all the same to him; he would examine them, and would kill them if I was not quick enough to take them from him. At home he pulled books to pieces, and boxes, and his gollywog. He snatched at everything, tried his teeth on it, wanted to get his hands on everything, and threw it away or took it to himself. Oh, some day! Some day he would know his way about.

At this period, when Hanna was still communicative, she would often draw my attention to things that Fipps said; she was enchanted by his innocent glances, his innocent talk and behaviour. But I couldn't discover any innocence in the child now that he was no longer defenceless and dumb as in the first weeks of his life. And at that time he was doubtless not innocent either, but merely incapable of expressing himself, a bundle of delicate flesh and sinew, with faint breath, and with a huge dull head that served, like a lightning-conductor, to deaden the world's piercing messages.

When he was a little older Fipps was sometimes allowed to play with other children in a blind alley beside the house. Once, on my way home at lunchtime, I saw him there with three other little boys, scooping up water from the gutter in an old tin can. Then they stood in a circle, talking. It looked like a conference. (It was the way engineers conferred about where they would begin the borings, where the first well should be sunk.) They squatted down on the pavement, and Fipps, who was holding the tin, was on the point of emptying it when they got up again and went three paving-stones further. But this place also seemed to turn out unsuitable for the undertaking. They got up once again. There was tension in the atmosphere. What masculine tension! Something must be done! And then, a yard away, they found

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the place. They squatted down again, becoming silent, and Fipps tilted the tin. The dirty water flowed over the cobbles. They stared at it, silently, solemnly. The thing had been done, it was finished. Perhaps it was a success. It must surely have been a success. The world could rely on these small men; they would keep it going all right. I was now quite certain that they would keep it going. I went into the house, up to the apartment, and threw myself on the bed in our room. The world had been kept going, the place had been found whence some more progress could be made, and it had been done, a move in the same old direction. I had hoped my child would not find that direction. And once, a long time ago, I had even feared that he might not find his way about at all. Fool that I was, I had feared he would not find the direction!

I got up and flung a few handfuls of water, cold from the tap, into my face. I wanted no more of this child. I hated him because he understood things too well, because I could already see him following in all the footsteps there were.

I went about extending my hatred to everything that emanated from human beings, to the tram-routes, the number-plates on houses, titles, clocks and calendars, all that ingenious tangled mess that is called order—I hated the collecting of garbage, programmes of series of lectures, registrar's offices, all these wretched institutions that it's now futile to attack and which indeed nobody even dreams of attacking, all these altars at which I too had sacrificed but at which I had no mind to see my child sacrificed. What had my child to do with it? He had not set the world up the way it was, he had not caused the damage done to it. Why should he set himself up in it just the same way! I screamed at the census office and the schools and the barracks: Give him a chance! Give my child just one single chance before he goes to the dogs! I raged against myself because I had forced my son into the world and had done nothing to set him free. I owed it to him, I had to act, I must go away with him, go off to some island with him. But where is there an island from which a new man can found a new world? I was trapped together with the child, condemned from the very beginning

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to keep on keeping on with the old world. That was why I dropped the child. I dropped him out of my love. For this child was capable of everything, only not of stepping out of the ranks, breaking through the satanic circle.

Fipps played his way through the years until it was time to begin school. He played them away. I was glad that he should play, but not these games, which were showing him the way to later games. Hide and seek, counting-out games, cops and robbers... I wanted quite different games for him, pure play, and fairy-tales different from those already known. But nothing occurred to me, and he was bent entirely on imitation. One wouldn't think it possible, but there it is: there's no way out for the like of us. Again and again everything divides into above and below, good and evil, light and dark, into quantity and quality, friend and foe, and in the fairy-tales, whenever other beings or animals appear, before you know where you are they have taken on human form again.

No longer knowing how or for what I should form his mind, I gave it up. Hanna noticed that I was no longer bothering about him. Once we tried to talk about it, and she stared at me as though I were a monster. I couldn't produce all my arguments, because she got up, cut me short, and went into the nursery. It was evening, and from that evening on she began to do something that she would earlier no more of thought of than I: she began teaching the child to say prayers. Now I lay me down to rest... Dear God, make me a good boy. And so forth. I didn't bother about that either, but I dare say they gradually built up a considerable repertoire. I think she hoped it would somehow protect him. Anything would have done, so far as she was concerned: a cross or some little mascot, a spell, anything. Fundamentally she was right, since Fipps would soon fall among the wolves and would soon be howling with the wolves. "God bless" was perhaps the last chance. We were both delivering him up each in our own way.

When Fipps came home from school with bad marks, I didn't scold him at all, but I didn't comfort him either. Hanna secretly agonised. After lunch she always sat down and helped

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him with his homework, "heard" what he had to memorise. She did it all as well as anyone could. But I didn't believe in the thing at all. It was all the same to me whether Fipps later went to a grammar school or not, whether he turned out well or not. A labourer wants his son to be a doctor; a doctor wants his to be at least a doctor. I don't understand that. I didn't want to think of Fipps being either cleverer or better than ourselves. Nor did I want him to be fond of me; he didn't have to obey me, didn't ever have to do as I wished. No, what I wanted... All I wanted was that he should start all over again from the beginning, show me in a single gesture that he didn't have to reproduce our gestures. I never saw anything of the sort. I was born anew, but he was not! It was I—I was the first human being, I had played everything away, squandered everything, done nothing!

There was nothing I wished for Fipps, absolutely nothing at all. I merely went on watching him. I don't know whether it's right for a man to watch his own child like that. Like a research-worker observing a "case". I was observing this hopeless case, the human being—this child that I could not love as I loved Hanna, whom after all I never quite dropped because she couldn't disappoint me. She already belonged to the species "human being", like me, when I first met her, a fine specimen, experienced, slightly individual and yet not particularly so, a woman and then the woman I married. I was all the time building up a case against this child and myself—against him because he cancelled out a tremendous expectation, against myself because I could not prepare the ground for him. I had expected that this child, because of being a child—yes, I had expected that he would redeem the world. It sounds monstrous. And I really did behave monstrously towards the child; but there was nothing monstrous about what I hoped for. It was merely that I had not been prepared for the child, like everyone before me. I had thought nothing of it when I embraced Hanna, when I was at peace in the dark womb—I couldn't think. It was good to marry Hanna, not only on the child's account, but I was never again happy with her, only intent on seeing that she did not have

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another child. She wished it—I have grounds for assuming that, although she never speaks of it now and makes no move of that kind. One might think that now, more than ever, Hanna would think of having a child; but she is as though turned to stone. She doesn't go away from me and she doesn't come to me. She bears me a grudge in a way that nobody should bear a grudge against another, since he is not lord of such incomprehensible things as death and life. In those days she would have liked to raise a whole brood, and I frustrated that. She was prepared to accept all conditions, I—none. Once when we were having an argument she explained to me everything that she wanted to do and to have for Fipps. *Everything*: a sunnier room, more vitamins, a sailor-suit, more love, all love, she wanted to lay in whole stores of love, enough to last a lifetime, because of the world outside, because of people... a good school, foreign languages, developing his particular gifts... She wept, she was hurt because I laughed at her. I don't think she considered for a moment that Fipps would be just one of the people "out in the world", that he would be capable of causing pain and humiliation, of getting the better of others, of killing, like them, even that he would be capable of a single mean action; and I had every reason to suppose it. For evil, as we call it, was there in the child like a focus of infection. I don't even need to recall the affair of the knife by way of example. It began much earlier, when he was about three or four. I came in as he was going around, crying with rage: a tower he had built of toy bricks had fallen down. Suddenly he stopped howling and said quietly and emphatically: "I'll burn the house down. I'll smash everything. I'll show you." I took him on my knee, petted him and promised to build the tower up again for him. He repeated his threats against us both. Hanna, who came in at that point, was for the first time at a loss. She admonished him and asked him who taught him to say such things. He answered firmly: "Nobody."

Then there was the little girl who lived in the same building—he pushed her down the stairs, was then, I think, very frightened by what he had done, promised never to do

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it again, and then did do it again. For a time he was always hitting out at Hanna. That too passed off.

I admit I'm forgetting to mention how many quaint things he said, how affectionate he could be, how rosy and glowing he was when he woke in the mornings. I noticed all that too and I was often tempted to grab hold of him and kiss him, as Hanna did, but I didn't want to be lulled and deluded by such things. I was on my guard. For what I was hoping for was nothing monstrous. It was not that I had grandiose plans for my child, but I did wish for that little thing, that slight deviation. Of course, if a child is called Fipps... Did he have to live up to his name like that? Going about bearing the name of a lap-dog. Eleven years spent on learning trick after trick. (Hold your spoon nicely. Don't walk in the gutter. Did you say, 'Thank you'? Don't talk with your mouth full.)

From the time he began going to school, I took to being out more often than I was at home. I would be at the café, playing chess, or, claiming that I had work to do, I would shut myself up in my room and read. I got to know Betty, a girl from a shop in the Maria-Hilferstrasse, and brought her stockings, cinema-tickets, or something to eat, until she became quite used to me. She was brusque, undemanding, subservient, and the best one could say about the lack of pleasure she took in her evenings off was that she enjoyed eating. For a whole year I went to see her fairly often, would lie down beside her on the bed in her furnished room, where she would read an illustrated weekly while I drank a glass of wine; then she would fall in with my wishes without more ado. It was a time of immense bewilderment, on the child's account. I never slept with Betty; on the contrary, I was in search of self-gratification, of that furtive, forbidden liberation from woman and sex. So as not to be trapped, so as to remain independent. I did not want to lie with Hanna again, because I should only have yielded to her.

Although I made no effort to palliate the fact that I spent the evenings out during such a long period, my impression was that Hanna suspected nothing. One day I discovered that it was not so; she had once already seen me with Betty at the

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Café Elshof, where we often met after the shops closed, and again only two days later when I was queuing up, together with Betty, outside the Cosmos Cinema. She behaved in a way that was quite unlike her, looking right through me as though she didn't know me, so that I didn't know what to do. I gave her a slight benumbed nod and, feeling Betty's hand in mine, moved on towards the ticket-office; and, incredible as it seems to me now, I actually went into the cinema. After the show, during which I was preparing myself for reproaches and working out my defence, I took a taxi home, although it was only a short distance, as though in such a way I could still put something right and stop something from going wrong. Since Hanna said nothing, I plunged into my carefully rehearsed speech. She remained doggedly silent, as though I were talking to her about things that didn't concern her. When at last she did speak, it was to ask me, timidly, to think of the child. "For Fipps' sake..." That was what she actually said! I was stricken, because she was so embarrassed, begged her forgiveness, went down on my knees, promised her "never again", and indeed I never saw Betty again. I don't know why I nevertheless wrote her two letters, which I'm sure she didn't value in the least. There was no answer, nor did I look for any. As though trying to send those letters to myself or to Hanna, I had revealed myself in them as never before to any human being. Sometimes I was afraid of being blackmailed by Betty. Blackmailed—in what way? I sent her money. In what way could she blackmail me, since Hanna knew about her?

This bewilderment. This bleakness.

As a man I felt extinguished, impotent. I wished to remain so. If there was any reckoning-up, it would come out in my favour. To resign from sex, from generation, to get to the end, to some end—that was all I still wanted!

But everything that happened wasn't simply a matter of me or Hanna or Fipps, it was a matter of father and son, of a responsibility and a death.

There's a saying I once read in some book: "It is not Heaven's way to raise Its head." It would be a good thing if

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everyone knew that Heaven. Oh, truly it is not Heaven's way to gaze down, giving signs to the bewildered creatures below. At least not where such a sombre drama is taking place, in which It too—that imaginary "above"—has a part to play. Father and son. A son—what is incomprehensible is that there there should be such a thing at all. Such words as "incomprehensible" come to my mind now because there is no clear word for this dark matter; even thinking about it is enough to make one lose one's reason. A dark matter: for there was my seed, indefinable, uncanny even to me, and then Hanna's blood, in which the child had been nourished and which flowed at his birth, all of it together a dark matter. And it had ended with blood, with his blazingly bright childish blood, flowing from the wound in his head.

He couldn't say anything, as he lay there on the rock-ledge in the ravine. Only to the schoolfellow who was the first to reach him he said: "You—". He tried to raise his hand, to point out something or to clutch at him. But the hand wouldn't move any more. And then at last, a few moments later when the master bent over him, he whispered:

"Want to go home."

I shall take good care not to interpret this sentence as meaning that he explicitly wanted Hanna and me. The fact is, people want to go home when they feel they are dying, and that was what he felt. He was a child, he had no great last messages to utter. For Fipps was just a perfectly ordinary child, and there was nothing special that could have disturbed his last thoughts. The other boys and the master had then collected branches, made a stretcher of them, and carried him down to the village. On the way, almost as soon as they had begun to move, he died. Passed away? Departed? In the obituary notice we said: "... only child of... as the result of an accident." The man at the printer's who took the order for the mourning cards asked if he didn't want to say "our dearly loved only child", but Hanna, who was at the telephone, said no, it went without saying that he had been loved and dearly loved, and it didn't make any difference now. I was foolish enough to try to embrace her for these

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words: to such a pass had my feelings for her come. She pushed me away. Does she even notice that I'm there? What in all the world is she reproaching me with?

Hanna, who for a long time had been the only one to look after him, goes about, unrecognisable, as if the spotlight that used to illumine her, when she held the centre of the stage with Fipps and by virtue of Fipps, had been turned off. There is nothing more to be said about her, as though she had neither qualities nor peculiarities. Once she was cheerful and vivacious, anxious, gentle and severe, always prepared to guide the child, to let him go his way, and again to draw him close to her. After the incident of the knife, for instance, she went through her finest time, glowing with magnanimity and understanding; it was her opportunity to stand by the child and his faults, to go bail for everything, everywhere. It was in his third year at school. Fipps had gone for another little boy with a pocket-knife. He meant to stab him in the chest, but the knife slipped and struck the child in the arm. We were summoned to the school, and I had depressing discussions with the headmaster and his teachers and the parents of the injured child—depressing because I didn't doubt that Fipps was quite capable of such and even far worse things, but couldn't very well say so—depressing because the points of view that I was forced to adopt were not of the slightest interest to me. Nobody was clear about what we should do with Fipps. He sobbed, now defiantly, now desperately, and I suppose one might say he was sorry he had done it. All the same, we couldn't get him to go and apologise to the other child. Finally we made him do it; the three of us went to the hospital together. But I believe that Fipps, who had had nothing against the child when he attacked him, began to hate him from the moment when he had to say his piece. It was no childish anger he felt, but a very controlled, very subtle, very adult hatred. He had succeeded in having a complicated emotion that he kept hidden from everyone; he had earned his spurs as a human being.

Whenever I think of the school outing that brought about the end of everything, I remember the knife incident too, as

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though they were somehow connected, because of the shock that reminded me of my child's existence. For apart from that those few school years are blank in my memory, because I paid no attention to the fact that he was developing, his mind growing more active and his feelings more complex. I suppose he was like all children at that age: wild and affectionate, noisy and secretive—in Hanna's eyes quite special, in Hanna's eyes unique.

The headmaster rang me up at the office. This had never happened before; even when the incident of the knife occurred they had telephoned home, and it was Hanna who had let me know. I met the man downstairs in the hall of the office building half an hour later. We went to the café across the street. He began by trying to say what he had to tell me in the hall, and then in the street, but in the café too he obviously felt that the place still wasn't right. Perhaps there isn't any right place for the news that a child is dead.

The master was not to blame, he said.

I nodded. It was all the same to me.

The path had been quite safe, but Fipps had slipped away from the rest of the class, perhaps for fun or in a spirit of adventure, or perhaps just looking for a stick.

The headmaster began to stammer.

He had slipped on a rock and had fallen to the rock below.

His head injury had been a minor one, but the doctor had found the explanation of his sudden death in a cyst... I probably knew...

I nodded. Cyst? I didn't even know what a cyst was.

The whole school was deeply shocked and grieved, the headmaster said. An enquiry would be held. The police had been informed...

I wasn't thinking of Fipps, but of the master, for whom I felt sorry, and I made it clear that no trouble need be expected from my side.

Nobody was to blame. Nobody.

I got up before we had had time to order anything and left a coin on the table. We took leave of each other. I went back to the office and left again immediately, went back to the

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café, to have a cup of coffee after all, although I would rather have had a brandy or a whisky. I didn't dare to drink brandy. It was lunchtime, I had to go home now and tell Hanna. I don't know how I managed it or what I said. As we were moving away from the door of the apartment, through the hall, she must have realised. It all went very quickly. I had to put her to bed and call the doctor. She was out of her mind, and she went on screaming until she lost consciousness. She screamed as horribly as at his birth, and I was in terror for her just as I had been then. All I wanted was that nothing should happen to Hanna. What I kept on thinking was: Hanna! Never of the child.

In the days that followed I saw to everything on my own. At the cemetery—I had kept it from Hanna when the funeral was to take place—the headmaster made a speech. It was a fine day, with a faint breeze, and the ribbons on the wreaths fluttered like decorations at a party. The headmaster kept on talking. For the first time I saw the whole class assembled, those boys with whom Fipps had spent half of nearly every day, a crowd of little fellows all staring blankly straight ahead, and among them, I knew, there was one whom Fipps had tried to kill. There is an inward chill that makes what is nearest and what is farthest equally remote. The grave, the mourners, and the wreaths—all of it receded. I saw the whole City Cemetery drifting far away to the skyline, to the East, and even while my hand was being shaken all I felt was grip after grip and saw the faces far away, saw them clearly and as if from close at hand, yet very remote, infinitely remote.

Go and learn the shadow-language! Learn it yourself!

But now that everything is over and Hanna no longer spends hours sitting in his room, but has allowed me to lock the door through which he ran so often, I sometimes talk to him in the language that I can't believe to be good.

My little savage. My heart.

I am ready to carry him on my back, and I promise him a blue balloon, promise him we'll go in a boat on the old Danube, promise him stamps. When he's scratched his knee, I kiss the place better. I help him to do his sums.

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Even if I can't bring him back to life this way, still, it isn't too late to think: I have accepted this son of mine. I could not be nice to him because I went too far with him.

Don't go too far. First learn how to go on. Learn it yourself!

But first one would have to tear down the arch of sadness that spans the distance from a man to a woman. This distance, measurable in terms of silence—how is it ever to diminish? For to the end of our time what is mined ground for me will always be a garden for Hanna.

I have stopped thinking. I should like to get up, cross the dark passage and, without having to say a word, reach Hanna. I do not look at anything in this relation, neither my hands, which should hold her, nor my mouth, with which I should close hers. It doesn't matter in what tone each word is uttered when I come to her, with what warmth I give each sign of affection. It is not to have her back again that I would go, but in order to keep her in the world and so that she may keep me in the world. By virtue of union, mild and dark. If there are children after that embrace, very well, let them come, let them be there, let them grow up and become like all the rest. I shall devour them like Kronos, beat them like a huge terrible father, spoil them, sacred animals that they are, and let myself be cheated even as Lear was. I shall bring them up as the times demand, half for the wolfish reality of things and half according to the principles of morality—and I shall give them no vademecum. As it befits a man of my time: no wordly goods, no good advice.

But I don't know if Hanna is still awake.

I have stopped thinking. The flesh is strong and dark, burying a true feeling under the huge laughter of night.

I don't know if Hanna is still awake.

Translated from the German by Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser

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THE SAILOR, THE OLD WOMAN, AND THE GIRL

"Have you any cure," cried the young sailor
Pulling against the tide,
"Have you any herb or spell to help
This new pain in my side?"

The old woman gathering whelks
Raised her fierce gray head,
"The best cure in the world for that
Is, take her to your bed.

"If that won't do, there's two fine places
To end a lover's moans—
The ale-house with its lamp and barrel,
The kirk-yard with its stones.

"Or use the black worm of the mind.
Think, when she leans up close
And all the lurings of Delilah
Break open like a rose

"Against your lips and throat and eyes,
That I am lying there,
Time's first lover stripped to a thorn,
And that will end your care."

The girl sang from another shore
And the sweet oars beat on,
And the old woman laughed and struck
A limpit from the stone.

—GEORGE MACKAY BROWN

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Portrait of Alfred Chester

by Douglas Davis

Chronicle

by Alfred Chester

IN THE COLD

Last evening, while we were strangling on the fumes of the newly lighted coal stove, Harriet, who is very romantic, said: "It's the *house*, darling. It's the spirit of the house asserting itself through you."

I hope so. All the more personal explanations are much less simple—and isn't it prettier to feel you've submitted to being possessed of a hearty Georgian dybbuk than of a neurotic contemporary *zeitgeist* sludging your psyche around in self-destructions and retreatings from (as we nowadays call boring jobs and boring lives): Reality? Besides, there is this additional evidence in support of Harriet's theory: The last occupant of this apartment, Grant Lebwitz (presently a successful Broadway producer, but at that time an unsuccessful off-Broadway producer), was also forced into a corner, though his corner was at the other end of the flat.

Probably I am the only man in New York, if not in the whole country, who has been driven into one room of an

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enormous duplex penthouse where there is no central heating, no gas, no telephone, no electricity, no hot water, and who is typing right now by the light of an oil lamp and with his gloves on because it is eight degrees farenheit outside and scarcely warmer within, since the pot-bellied stove plugged into the fireplace heats only itself. So, hooray, I'm unique —but I'm also gloomy, though much more energetic than I've been in months, and perhaps the time has now come to think things over.

If Harriet is right, the first thing to think over is this authentic Georgian townhouse which stands in crumbling grandeur on a Greenwich Village street opposite a row of well-preserved but unauthentic Georgian townhouses with dwarfish sycamores in front of them. (Across-the-street is, at best, mid-Victorian, and if one could imagine Victorian houses having spirits, as opposed to ghosts, one would have to imagine these spirits being quite compatible with modern comforts, with scientific achievements—to the joy of those heated, lighted, air-conditioned tenants across the street.) For over a hundred years, this house was the home of a banker, his family, and his descendents. But then, toward the end of the Nineteenth Century, it was suddenly vacated and boarded up. The owners, however, remained the same. (I don't know any of the reasons for any of their actions; the Bureau of Records does not record emotions.) Just after the First World War, the building was sold, opened up, and the two lowest floors turned into a night club by Kinky Smith who was shot dead in a gangland battle in 1940. Until he died, Smith's place was one of the most fashionable and notorious clubs in New York, especially during Prohibition, and the neighbors have told me that the third floor of Kinky's was a whore house.

The two top floors—where I, in a manner of speaking, now live—did not escape from the general upheaval; they were completely modernized, and the Georgian never protested. Kinky Smith lived here in comfort for two decades. I know this from the man who installed the telephone last year when I moved in; he used to service Smith. There had been

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electric lights, steaming gas radiators, hot water, women in every room (perhaps he was confusing floors), refrigerators stuffed with champagne, and a tiled, patio'd, and hothoused roof filled with plants and flowers. The walls, by the way, had been every one covered with red brocade, and from the telephone man's description of the furniture I think it must have been Second Empire mixed with Louis Quatorze. Fancy, curly, golden, were the type of words he used while screwing the mechanism into the rotting woodwork.

After Smith's death, the building was sold to people who turned the club into a transvestite cabaret. Did the dybbuk retreat up the stairs in horror at this point? No, I cannot feel the spirit is a moral one so much as an aesthetic one. In any case, it is impossible to know, for no one seems to have lived in my apartment, or anywhere else in the house, during the transvestite era. (Whether, or how, the third floor was used in the Forties is something no one remembers any more.) In 1950, the police shut the cabaret, and the house was once again sold, this time to a woman who converted the two lower stories into a theater that is apparently cursed, for in its ten-year existence it has never run a successful play and has changed hands six times. The third floor became memorable again by being rebuilt as dressing rooms, and this apartment was used for storing scenery and costumes except for the brief period when it was let (to someone who had the good sense to get it rent controlled) and except for the year before I moved in when Grant Lebwitz, then the owner, lived here.

Lebwitz painted all the ceilings black, covered the walls with green and orange burlap, and made a heroic attempt to keep the apartment connected to the contemporary world. But the spirit had obviously had enough. It longed for a return. It wanted for the house what the house was built to contain. When the city marshall came to dispossess Lebwitz, there was no electricity, no gas, no telephone, no hot water, and no windows except in that last room whither Lebwitz had taken refuge; there was also no Lebwitz, he having driven off to Broadway and success in the middle of the night before,

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leaving the local shopkeepers with several hundred dollars worth of bad checks and the marshall to deal with the forty beatniks camping in the cellar. (The errand boy from the local liquor shop told me not so long ago that when he used to make deliveries to Lebwitz, the hashish and marihuana fumes—this sixteen-year-old can evidently distinguish between them—rising from the cellar were so powerful on the stairs that he'd be "high" before he reached the second floor, and he wasn't making a pun.)

The house now went to its present owner and my landlord, a rich young man with thin blonde hair and dreamy eyes who likes to give the impression that he is vague. He is the rebel son of a *nouveau riche* coffin manufacturer, and though I find him effete, I'm sure the coffin-maker feels rebelled against when young Mr. Tinley throws tantrums and shrieks about his father going counter to the life force. (I've learned of these scenes from Harriet who had them described to her at the Central Park zoo last spring by a close but indiscreet friend of Mr. Tinley who, recognizing Harriet as someone he'd seen on the stairs of this building, began talking to her. He gave her another interesting bit of gossip, which I will mention later on.) When Mr. Tinley advertised that this apartment was to let, he had several not-so-vague thoughts in mind. For one thing, his idea of a tenant was someone rich and probably crazy who would rebuild the flat, inside and topside, while paying a monthly rent of two hundred dollars. He didn't say this in his ad, but it was perfectly clear when out of curiosity I went to look at the fabulous ruin described in the *Times*. Now, I was neither rich nor crazy, and though the place was a shambles, I was overcome by the vast amounts of space, the incredible height of the rooms, the rickety interior staircase, the boarded-up penthouse, the broken fireplaces, the smashed skylights, the ragged roof whence nearly all of shattered lower Manhattan can be seen. And this was in New York, that anomaly of cities growing younger every day, where the oldest houses are Victorian, where characterless glass and steel characterize our dreams and hearts, where civilization has come to the pinnacle of conceit and lies

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thinking of itself as the phoenix to rise one day newly born out of its senescence. I had, the year before I found this apartment, returned home from a decade in Europe, shocked to find my elderly mother-city waiting for me in the port, dressed like an adolescent. But I loved her, and if that was what she wanted to look like, I would not complain. And, like any obedient son, I sought to please her, to do as she asked. For ten years I had wandered in beggary over the old world. Now I would put my ways aside. And I did. I found myself an excellent and boring job, and I rented a brand-new, low-ceilinged, hideous little cell, cool in summer, warm in winter. I lived this way until I saw Mr. Tinley's ad and came to find age and beauty on this Greenwich Village street. Yes, I and the spirit must have recognized each other at once, known our need of one another. But, though I spoke to it sincerely, it withheld from me a part of the truth: it wished no compromise. While I, of course, did.

I set out to get the apartment—not as easy a task as you might suppose, for there were others who wanted it, and I had to compete against people much richer than myself. But in spite of my tastes I am my mother-city's son, victim of the American dream, full of hope, courage, eternal youth, energy, do-it-yourself, and unscrupulousness. No doubt about it; even if the dybbuk hadn't been rooting for me, I'd have gotten the place anyhow.

I guessed at once (there being no heat or hot water) that Mr. Tinley was breaking laws, and so on the very first day I came to this house, I checked with a friend of a friend at the rent commission and learned that the apartment was controlled at fifty-two dollars a month. The next day, when Mr. Tinley said he didn't know whom he would choose as his tenant, I offered him two hundred and fifty dollars a month and suggested I would go higher. He was tempted but hesitant; perhaps he thought me crazier than he'd bargained for. If so, I would have to be not only crazier but richer, rich beyond the dreams of any mere coffin-maker's son, except possibly during a plague year.

I arrived one morning, twenty minutes late for an ap-

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pointment, breathless, in borrowed evening clothes, apologizing for my lateness and explaining that I'd been to a dinner party in New Orleans (he'd seen me the afternoon before) and it had unexpectedly lasted through most of the night.

Another day, I appeared with several artist friends pretending—in trimmed beards and their best, or only, suits—to be architects and interior decorators. Oh, the joy in Mr. Tinley's eyes as we helped him see the broken walls and windows coming down and then going up strong and new, as he saw ginkgo trees growing through the skylights, as the facade became all glass like a Parisian *atelier d'artiste*, as the ceilings were rebuilt and frescoed by de Kooning and Rothko, as the roof was retiled and re-hothoused, as a central-heating unit was installed. (I should now mention, not to justify myself, but to refute forever the notion that "it takes one to know one", the other bit of gossip learned by Harriet at the zoo. It was that Mr. Tinley was something of a con man himself, for he had been planning to recover the apartment for his own use after the expiration of the three-year lease he offered.)

Tinley surrendered, and to his astonishment I brought over a couple of suitcases and a camp bed and moved into the shambles the same day we signed the lease. He asked me nervously on the stairs if I wouldn't be more comfortable moving in *after* the reconstruction, and I only shook my head and blushed. I always blush when I'm at last caught out; if ever I robbed a bank or committed murder I'd probably blush at police accusations. It often charms people out of their anger, though it didn't Mr. Tinley, alas, and after that first day he never did more than nod to me if we passed each other in the building. And even the nodding stopped soon enough, for the rent commission reduced my rent to thirty-five dollars (because of Mr. Tinley's lack of compliance to his landlordly obligations), and I was left naked, except for my blushes, at the top of the house.

With the occasional help of friends, I spent all my spare time that late autumn, winter, and early spring, restoring the apartment. The place took shape. It became nothing so marvelous as Tinley's fantasy or Smith's reality, but it ceased

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to be a ruin and became a home. The structure was patched and painted, the utilities—all, all, every one of them—were installed. Gas heated my radiators and the water tank, cooled my refrigerator; electric lights filled all the ancient chandeliers. By simply reaching out my hand, as the ads say, I could speak to friends anywhere in the world. By the time the warm weather arrived I was living in the whole of the apartment—two floors, eight rooms of Eighteenth Century grandeur and Twentieth Century comforts. And my plans were boundless. Slowly, presently, in a couple of years, the place *would* be like Tinley's fantasy.

What happened then?

Oh, indeed, what happened then?

There was a sudden change in me, as if my energy had sprung a leak. I was tired. This didn't seem odd at first, since I'd labored without pause for nearly six months. I needed a rest. I took two weeks off from my job and rested, seemed to feel better, went back to work. Within ten days I was again exhausted, and I visited a doctor who, finding nothing the matter, supposed it was nerves and gave me tranquillizers. So I became tranquil as well as enervated. Where it had been a great effort to get up each morning and go to work, it now became a bore, and soon it seemed absurd. My rent was low, the weather was mild, so no heating was necessary; electricity is all but free; and, being a bachelor, I am continually invited to meals. Therefore, one morning in May, I became not only tired and tranquil, but idle and independent, the way a Georgian ought to be. I began to live on my savings.

Ah, the delicious sloth of last spring and summer! Day after sunny day, Harriet and I and others would lie out on the roof in bathing suits, drinking martinis, hardly speaking, gazing west at the blue rise of Jersey, more placid than lower Manhattan. There is nothing to record about those months except my indolence, the serene passing of time, and the fact that my savings dwindled.

I had stopped reading my mail because it was mainly bills, and bills made my nerves twitch. I threw all my letters away unopened. So it came as a surprise when, in October, I returned

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home after an evening out and found my lights weren't working. Under the door was a note which, when I read it the next morning, proved to contain the first words addressed to me by Mr. Tinley in nearly a year: "A man from Con Edison went down the cellar and locked your electric meter. He wanted to lock your gas meter too, but he couldn't get at it as it's in your kitchen. He'll be back tomorrow. He says you owe the company over two hundred dollars."

Well, what did I need electricity for? I went out every evening anyhow, and though, as the autumn deepened, my evenings would have to begin at four in the afternoon, so what? Who needed electricity? I never read anymore. One could undress by candlelight, bathe by candlelight, make love by candlelight. And what had radio or television to offer me but additional fatigue and rumors of a world that seemed more and more farfetched, fictitious, alien.

Gas, however, gave me second thoughts. I heated, bathed and refrigerated by virtue of gas, and I didn't like the idea of being cold or dirty. And what is whisky without an ice cube in it? What is the significance of a warm martini? Yet obviously I couldn't throw two hundred dollars to the winds, having so little money left. A morning spent in meditation, very simply solved when a knock came at my door. I simply did not reply. It was my apartment, and no one could force me to open the door. A man's home is his castle, etc., etc. Soon, inevitably, Con Edison would forget about me. I didn't belong to their world, nor they to mine. Through some cosmic aberration, our orbits had crossed, but natural law would soon assert itself, and our orbits would grow further and further apart.

Nonetheless, I took the precaution during the next four months of never opening my door unless the person knocking at it called out my name and I recognized the voice. Sometimes there would be no voice, only a rapping of knuckles on wood, and then I would sit down, smoke a cigarette, and wait patiently for the derangers of the cosmos to rotate away. Occasionally, a note from Mr. Tinley would inform me that Con Edison had appeared, but that I had

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apparently not been at home.

In November, the telephone rang, and a polite but firm female voice, identifying itself as Miss O'Gara, told me that if I didn't pay the telephone company some unbelievably large amount of money, service would be discontinued. Best to be simple.

"I understand the company's position perfectly, Miss O'Gara. In spite of my hepatitis, I realize that great corporations must act impersonally."

"Hepatitis!" exclaimed Miss O'Gara.

"Oh, I'll live, all right," I said cheerfully. "I've got the endurance of an ox. It's a little difficult just at the moment though, since I'm barely able to crawl out of bed, and naturally I'm dependent on friends for everything. But, thank God, there's always a telephone at the corner bar—".

"Oh dear, oh dear. Would it disturb you very much if I phoned you back in a few minutes?"

No, it wouldn't.

And a little while later, Miss O'Gara called to say that the company was most saddened by my illness and would certainly not discontinue service in spite of that sum of money they wanted.

Like Con Edison, the telephone company too would forget about me. But, as it happens, they did not. An hour-long call to a friend in London hardened Miss O'Gara to my plights and I was disconnected two days before Christmas.

So winter and the new year began with two-thirds of my utilities gone, and myself not feeling especially troubled, except when anyone asked me why. Had I the energy or inclination to pose, I might have pretended I was operating for some principle, some cause. I might have sneered wrathfully at my questioner and made a mockery of his silly electric bulbs, his ridiculous telephones. But I only felt uneasy and said, as people have always said, "Oh well, no money."

Yesterday, like every day, I woke at noon and looked out the window at a heavy fall of snow. Since I was to meet Harriet at one o'clock, I knew I would have to rise very soon, dress and walk through the snow, and while I considered this,

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someone knocked at my door. I lay without moving, waiting for a voice. No voice. Only knocking that turned to pounding and finally to kicking. I smoked a cigarette and reflected, not uninterestingly. No one who comes to give you anything is ever violent in his anxiety to see you. This sounds cynical, but it isn't. The givers, the true lovers, destroy nothing, depart sadly. Only those who come to take will smash your door down.

Therefore, I knew they'd come to take—and as I had nothing left to give except the gas, I knew who they must be. I didn't move.

After about a quarter-hour of this frenzy, there was silence. I waited a while longer, then made to rise from my bed. But as I moved, a terrific crash came from the back room, lower floor. I jumped up, raced down the stairs, and there, through the window giving on the fire escape, or rather through the space that had so lately contained the window, six men were entering, two of them cops. It took me quite a few seconds to decide upon an attitude; I chose indignation, in spite of my pajamas.

"What is the meaning of this?" I bellowed.

One of the men thrust a court order at me. "We've come to take out your gas meter."

"What are you talking about?"

"Court order... Non-payment..."

"How dare you? How dare you smash my windows?"

"Cool it, man," said one of the cops.

"Cool it?" I shouted without conviction. "Only apes and reptiles climb through windows. All the human beings I know use the door."

"We been knocking at your door for twenty minutes."

This was a lie, but of course I couldn't say so. "You couldn't have knocked very loud."

And so on.

They ripped the meter off the kitchen wall and left through the door.

My gas radiators stopped hissing, the heated rooms wilting like balloons. The refrigerators clicked off. The flame in the hot water apparatus twitched, gasped, died. I was cooling it,

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to be sure. I ran to the living room and took a shot of whisky to steady my nerves, and as I stood there waiting for them to steady, I realized I wasn't nervous at all. I was delighted. A final step had somehow been taken. I had submitted to something; I didn't know to what, but whatever it was, I had gone the whole way, and dybbuk or *zeitgeist* was at last pacified. I hadn't felt so full of energy and joy in months. When I raced down the street in the heavy snow to meet Harriet at the coffee shop, I was singing *Voi che sapete* (though I am not, of course, a soprano) at the top of my voice.

Harriet did not participate in my enthusiasm. She told me to shut up and revealed a streak of practicality that had never before shown in America and only seldom in Europe, where we met.

"Obviously, you have to do something about the heat, darling. One can manage without telephones and lights, but during the coldest winter in history, you can't stand around a candle and get warm. The fireplaces will never do; they burn everything up too quickly. You'll have to get a coal stove."

But whatever misgivings she had about the loss of my final utility disappeared when we went shopping in the snow on Carmine Street. "Oh, it'll be just like Paris. You can put tremendous pots-au-feu on the fire and cook it for days. It'll be marvelous." So she was thrilled when, bargaining in Italian, we bought a little stove, two sacks of coal, a kerosene lamp and a huge iron casserole for the beef soup. The things were delivered after nightfall while Harriet and I sat shivering by candlelight and talking about Paris.

Now it is the next day. The stove couldn't cook a marshmallow, let alone pot-au-feu. And I am so cold that I cannot gather the courage to go into the back room (where the window is gone) and shovel out the knee-high drifts of snow that piled up through the night. Can the dybbuk not see what is going to happen? The spirit is going to suffer as much as the flesh. The ceilings are buckling from the weight and the wet of the snow on the roof. The putty is cracking in the windows. The snow in the back room will thaw with the coming of spring and the floors will rot. Will the dybbuk

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now let me take a job? He cannot have everything his own way; we must work hand in hand or else soon some glass and steel monster, full of tiny cells, will stand where we now stand.

A thought, a horrible thought, suddenly occurs to me. Perhaps the spirit isn't a Georgian at all. Perhaps he's a contemporary New Yorker, no mere neurotic *zeitgeist* but one stupefied with the phoenix's dream. Perhaps he hasn't been fighting to recover his origins but to insure his rejuvenation by improverishing me, by making a fiasco out of the theater. Perhaps soon there will be no one rich enough or crazy enough to buy the house or restore the apartment. It will come down. It will be lost. And have I been duped? Have I, the hopeful romantic, been submitting to the future, not the past?

THE WANDERER AWAITING PREFERMENT

In a world where no one knows for sure
I roll my blanket for the snow to find:
come winter, then the blizzard, then demand—
the final strategy of right, the snow
like justice over stones like bread.

"Tell us what you deserve," men often said.
My hands belong to cold, my voice to dust—
nobody's brother. With a gray-eyed stare
the towns I pass repeat my hometown's claim:
"Wanderer, swerve"—by now a faint command.

Only what winter gives, I claim. As trees
drink dark through roots for their peculiar grain,
as meager justice climbs up through the grass,
I train my private storm within myself.
Men should not claim, nor should they have to ask.

—WILLIAM STAFFORD

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TWO SONNETS

A FLOWER FOUND IN A BOOK

She never knew the brittle rose would wake
  The far-off dormant egypt of its day
That she entombed; spring gave, autumn would take
  The mocking pity of its death away,
High summer that she lived through would be killed,
  Sink down, die prematurely on the noon,
And in the lamplight grey with love be stilled,
  And even she become austere too soon;
He companies the winter of the rose,
  Under the winter's lamp delineates
So lovingly the petals that she grows
  Tragic with all, no artist recreates;
For Blooded Damask was the flower she chose,
  And our tears fill the Resurrection Rose.

BESTIARY

  Then make a Dragon of the Time and check
Saint George the Heart, and look you ride to ruin
By the ruffled Mere before the Beast can wreck
Your tempered Sword and this, your fine intending;
Trot quickly by, or gaping Thing will flick
An armoured tail towards the Sacred Cross
Or lumber spiky paws too close, restrict
Your own grey graceful Charger, unemboss
Those pendent Emblems of your pretty Pride;
Such be your risk, fight fast or not at all;
You whisper up the Horse for one long ride?
Disarm and fear, sad Knight, you who will fall,
  Whose charging thunders wound in dusty skills,
  Time's Dragon as you sport your colour kills.

—PATRICK BOWLES

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

FICTION

Albert Guerard *(The Lusts And Gratifications Of Andrada)* is professor of English at Stanford University. ...*Andrada* is a part of his sixth novel, *The Exiles*, which will be published this autumn by Faber & Faber. His other novels include *Night Journey* and *The Bystander*.

Jorges Luis Borges *(Funes the Memorious)* is an Argentinian writer whose work has appeared in many Anglo-American magazines during the past decade, although his first collected volume will appear in English this year. It will be entitled *Labyrinths* and will include *Funes the Memorious*. In 1961, Borges was awarded the *Prix Formentor* at an international meeting of writers and editors in Majorca.

Samuel Beckett (from *How it is*) was born in Dublin in 1906 of Dublin parents. He published his first book, *Whoroscope*, in 1930 (The Hours Press, Paris). (For extended biography see The Paris Review, No 5). He settled definitively in France in 1937 and since his novel, *Watt*, written in English, most of his writing has been in French and has included a trilogy of novels, *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnameable*, and several plays for theatre and radio, including *Waiting for Godot* and *All That Fall* (written in English). His latest play, *Happy Days*, was published this year by Grove Press, New York. His *Poems in English* have recently been issued by John Calder, London. The section from his new novel, *How it is*, in the author's own translation, is printed here for the first time.

Ingeborg Bachmann (*Everything*) is an Austrian writer whose reputation became firmly established with the publication last year of her first collection of short stories, *Das dreissigste Jahr* in which her story *Everything* was included. She has also published two volumes of poetry, *Die gestundete Zeit* and *Anrunfug des Grossen Bären*, and has written plays for radio and an opera-libretto *Der Prinz von Homburg* based on the play by Kleist, for the German composer Hans Werner Henze. *Everything* was first published in French in the review, 'Preuves'.

CHRONICLE

Alfred Chester (*In The Cold*) now lives in the U.S.A. after many years in Paris, where he contributed to Botteghe Oscure, Merlin Magazine, and The Paris Review. His work appeared in the 1961 edition of *Best American Short Stories*. His recent volume of stories is entitled *In Praise of Vespasian*.

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INTERVIEWS

Donald Hall (*Ezra Pound Interview*) was for nine years Poetry Editor of The Paris Review. He has published a number of volumes of poetry, including *Exiles and Marriages* and *The Dark House* and, recently, a memoir of New England entitled *String Too Short To Be Saved*. He is now teaching at the University of Michigan.

George Wickes *(Henry Miller Interview)* is assistant professor of English at Harvey Mudd College. He has recently edited a volume of Miller-Durell correspondence, to be published this year. His interview with Aldous Huxley was published in The Paris Review 23.

PORTFOLIO

Hans Kinkel *(The Sculptor Gustav Seitz)* is one of the foremost German art critics and a regular contributor to the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* and *Die Welt*.

POETRY

David Ray *(Two Farm Scenes)* has appeared in The Paris Review 21. He is now teaching at Cornell University.

Christopher Logue *(Homer, The Iliad, Book 16)* was born in England in 1926. During the "50"s, lived in Paris, published several books of poetry. Now lives in London, where his plays "Antigone" and "The Lily-White Boys" have been performed at the Royal Court Theatre. He is at present writing songs for "The Establishment", London's satirical night-club. He writes: "This version could not have been written without the financial support of the Bollingen Foundation, to whose Trustees the author wishes to express his gratitude. He would also like it to be known that his knowledge of Homeric Greek is negligable, and that the cribs prepared for him by Donald Carne-Ross and Peter Levi, S.J., were of the greatest value." The complete text of Book 16 will be published by The Scorpion Press, London. A recording will be issued by the "77" Record Company.

Robert Patrick Dana *(Meditations on a Woman's Voice)* teaches at Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa, and formerly studied at the Writers' Workshop at the State University of Iowa.

William Meredith (*To Bertholt Brecht*) is currently on the faculty of Connecticut College in New London. In the past decade he has widely published his poems, of which the most recent collection is *The Open Sea*.

Steve Bronson *(At the Corner Light; Oath)*. Was born and raised in western Massachusetts, and at the universities of Illinois and Michigan and at Columbia University. Is at present employed to operate heavy construction equipment. He would be glad if readers would like to write him their reactions to his poems, at 11 Hastings St., Greenfield, Massachusetts.

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Donald Petersen (Paris Again) has been published in many magazines including the Western Review and The Paris Review 22. He has studied at the Writers' Workshop, Iowa.

Donald Finkel (*To Professor So-And-So*) published his first collection of poems, *The Clothing's New Emperor*, in Scribners' Poets of Today series. An editor of a new literary magazine, *MSS*, he teaches at Washington University, St. Louis.

George MacKay Brown *(The Sailor, The Old Woman and The Girl)* is an Orkneyman like Edwin Muir, with whom he studied at Newbattle Abbey College. A book of his verse, *Loaves and Fishes*, has been published in England.

William Stafford *(The Wanderer Awaiting Preferment)* lives near Portland, Oregon, where he teaches. His first book of poems, *West Of Yonr City*, was published by the Talisman Press.

Patrick Bowles (*Two Sonnets*) was born in England in 1927, educated in Rhodesia and South Africa and settled in Paris in 1951. Translated Samuel Beckett's novel *Molloy* from French, in collaboration with the author. His new translation of Friedrich Duerrenmatt's play *The Visit* will be published by Cape (London) and Grove Press (New York). The book from which these Sonnets are taken will be published this year by The Paris English Publishing Company. As from this issue is Paris Editor of The Paris Review.

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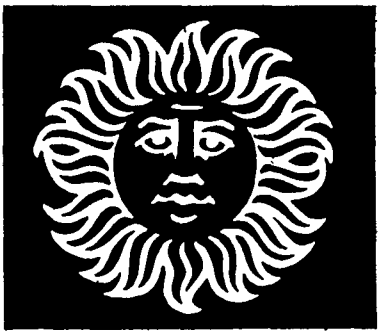

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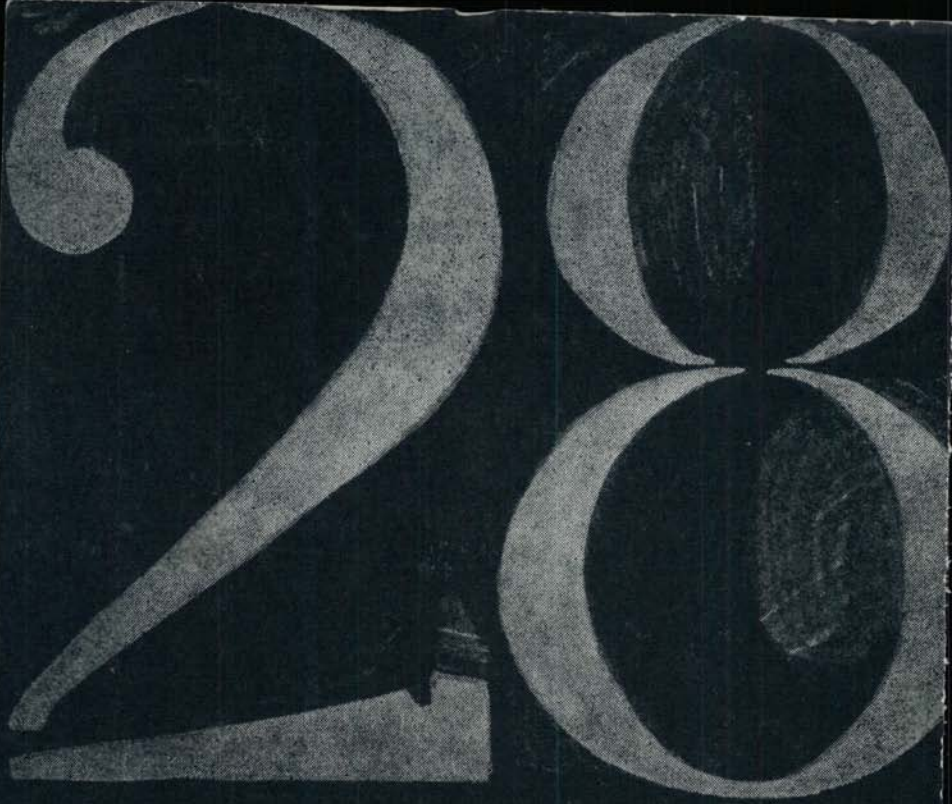

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